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HISTORY OF THE
PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

VOL. III

A.D. 1689 TO 1834

THE BEDE HISTORIES

EDITED BY H. L. POWELL

SERIES III

HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF
ENGLAND. By ALICE DRAYTON GREEN-
WOOD, F.R.Hist.Soc.

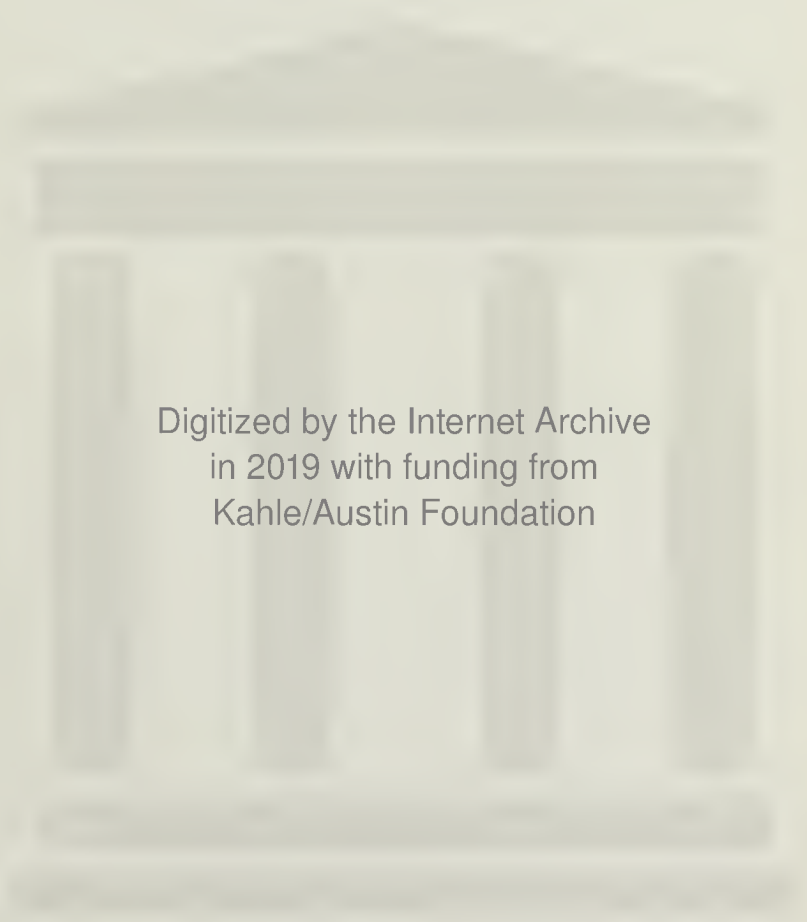
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WILLIAM PITT THE YOUNGER.
HOPPNER.

Frontispiece.

THE BEDE HISTORIES

SERIES III

EDITED BY H. L. POWELL

HISTORY OF THE
PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

BY

ALICE DRAYTON GREENWOOD, F.R.Hist.Soc.

AUTHOR OF "LIVES OF THE HANOVERIAN QUEENS OF ENGLAND," "VOYAGES AND
DISCOVERIES" (FROM HAKLUYT), ETC.

VOL. III

A.D. 1689 TO 1834

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

LONDON:

THE SHELDON PRESS

NEW YORK AND TORONTO: THE MACMILLAN CO.

Printed in Great Britain

DA32

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v.3

First published 1926

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE crowded age of history from 1688 to 1834 must be considered as composed of two periods.

First comes the tolerably homogeneous eighteenth century, reckoning from our constitutional revolution of 1688-9 to the entry of England into the French Revolution war in 1793.

Secondly, the epoch of that war, 1793-1815, and of its effects upon our country, a physical and moral storm-belt, culminating in another parliamentary reform which almost exactly filled the brief reign of William IV, 1830-37.

The long developments of the Victorian age and the rapidly mounting storm which burst in the terrific crash of 1914-18 must be postponed to the following volume.

The present volume closes with the destruction of the ancient Houses of Parliament in 1834, leaving the initial Poor-law reform for the volume on the Victorian age, which was so largely occupied with its effects. The colonial development of Australia, Canada and South Africa is also deferred to Vol. IV, in order not to interrupt a continuous story.

GUIDE TO BOOKS

The eighteenth century valued itself sufficiently to bequeath to posterity ample testimony to its own merits. Where these Memoirs were composed secretly for publication by a later generation some doubts are inevitable as to the candour of the writer (Hervey, Chesterfield and even Horace Walpole). But their correspondence is less suspect, and anyone who has time to delve into that of Lady Mary Wortley-Montagu, of Horace Walpole, and of others in the stiffer-looking volumes of the Historical MSS. Commission, will light upon varied entertainment, especially in the *Cornwallis Papers* and the *Sackville Papers*.

For the social history of any particular district the appropriate chapters in the Victoria County Histories often give good testimony. There are also several tourists' journals, of which the fullest for the opening of the period is Defoe's *Tour through Great Britain* (about 1724). More attractive are the candid jottings of Celia Fiennes, *Through England on a Side Saddle* (privately printed and very scarce), which may be compared with Moritz' *Travels in England in 1782*. *The Life and Times of Samuel Wesley*, together with *Yorkshire Diaries* (Surtees Soc. 65, 76), give pictures of York-

shire life; and the later *Memoirs of the Verney Family*, Lady Newton's *Lyme Letters*, The *Houblon Family*, Doughty's *The Betts of Wortham*, show the gentry of the period.

About the middle of the century the atrociously dull journal of Lord Grimston (in *Verulam Papers*, H.M.C.) provides a foil to all the others, and the *Journals* of John Wesley form an inexhaustible mine (from 1730); as do Johnson, Boswell, Mrs. Thrale, and Miss Burney.

Only at the close of the period do we reach the charming women delineators—Miss Mitford's *Our Village* (couleur de rose); Miss Edgeworth's various tales (moralised); Miss Martineau's *Stories illustrative of Political Economy* (less one-sided than her *History of the Peace*); and Jane Austen, whose types belong manifestly to a generation later than those of Fanny Burney.

The naval history has at last been made amply accessible. Besides the large publications of the Navy Records Society, such as the *Barham* and *Spencer Papers*, we have, in addition to Mahan's well-known *Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution*, Sir Julian Corbett's series—*England in the Mediterranean*, *England and the Seven Years' War*, *The Campaign of Trafalgar*, and *Napoleon and the British Navy after Trafalgar* (printed in the *Quarterly Review*, April 1922). Callender's *Sea Kings of Britain* (Vols. II, III) supplies a continuous naval history of most lively type, and often resolves old doubts, as on the loss of the *Royal George*. Above all must be named Hodges and Hughes' *Select Naval Documents*, the key to all the rest and as clear as it is fascinating. Nor are older compilations, Pinkerton's *Voyages* and Southey's *Nelson*, by any means obsolete.

For military history we have Fortescue's *History of the British Army* and Oman's *Wellington's Army*, as well as careful *Lives* of Clive, Coote and Munro, not forgetting the older works of Southey and G. R. Gleig. W. R. Fitchett's *Wellington's Men* reprints conveniently some contemporary accounts.

With regard to political history it is impossible to mention all the numerous volumes of general or special scope. A principal authority is the *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*. Upon the Revolution of 1688, T. H. Green's *Four Lectures on the English Revolution* is almost unique in not shirking the religious problem.

Dr. Holland Rose has presented the close of the century amply in *William Pitt and National Revival*, *William Pitt and the Great War* and a *Life of Napoleon*, while the perennial duel between Canning and Castlereagh has been brought up to date by Mr. Temperley's *George Canning* and Fortescue's *British Statesmen of the Great War*.

The study of this period, from the era of Pitt to the Reform Bill (1783 to 1832), is enlivened by the certainty that all the books about it will be partisan, particularly contemporary letters, papers, pamphlets and speeches. The Whigs have perhaps the liveliest record, with the *Letters of Junius*, the *Essays* of Sydney Smith,

and the voluminous and urbane output of Horace Walpole. But Canning and the *Anti-Jacobin* have seldom been equalled.

Speaking generally, Pope may serve as the critic and spokesman of the age of Anne and George I, Addison and Defoe of William's, Dr. Johnson of the central period, Cobbett of the close. Chesterfield illustrates only a small section of fashionable society, but Bolingbroke's *Patriot King* is a political standard. The choicest examples of propaganda are contained in Saintsbury's *Political Pamphlets* (Pocket Library).

Biographies are plentiful, and a few among them are also impartial monographs upon the political situation—Sir A. W. Ward's *The Electress Sophia*, Mr. Basil William's *William Pitt Earl of Chatham*, Mr. Charles Whibley's *William Pitt [the Younger]* and Fortescue's *Wellington*.

Other compact monographs are Anson's *Voyage*, the *Mutiny of the "Bounty,"* Ward's *The Period of Congresses*, W. F. Lord's *Lost Possessions of England* and the little volumes in the *Story of the Empire* series upon Australia, Canada and India. But the development of the Empire has an immense literature, whereof it is impossible here to select more than a few titles: H. L. Osgood's *The American Colonies in the Seventeenth Century*; the works of Francis Parkman (see p. 144, note); V. A. Smith, *The Oxford History of India*; H. E. Egerton, *Origin and Growth of the English Colonies*; and the *Historical Geography* of the British Colonies edited by Sir C. P. Lucas.

To some other works reference is made in the footnotes.

Among the historical novels which have interpreted for us certain aspects of the age it would be perhaps invidious to distinguish, save to mention Scott's *Heart of Midlothian* for the Porteus period and to say that in the present writer's opinion the ablest study of the personality of William III is that of Marjorie Bowen in *I will Maintain* and *William by the Grace of God*. Small books on the period by the present writer which possibly might be useful are, *Select Letters* of Horace Walpole, an edition of Macaulay's *Essay on Mme. D'Arblay* and an *Outline of European History 1649 to 1789*.

A. D. GREENWOOD.

October 1926.

CORRIGENDA IN VOLS. I AND II

The author will be glad if readers possessing vols. I and II would make in their copies the following corrections ; and she desires to express her thanks to critics who have pointed out some of them.

- Vol. I. p. 26, l. 23, *for* Ethelbald *read* Ethelbert.
 p. 253, l. 2, *read* fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.
 p. 277, l. 26 ,, in most of the country parishes.
 p. 278, l. 21, *for* they *read* such thinkers as Rolle.
 Table of sovereigns, p. 381—France, *read* 1316 Philip V,
 1322 Charles IV, 1328 Philip VI.
- Vol. II. p. 15, l. 11 from foot, *after* Urswick *insert* Dean.
 p. 21, l. 14, *read* 1503.
 p. 50, l. 28, *read* Fisher, successively Vice-chancellor and
 Chancellor.
 p. 81, l. 6, *read* almost every old vicarage.
 p. 111, l. 14, place name of Saunders *after* Rowland Taylor.
 p. 170, l. 25, *for* St. George's *read* St. Thomas's.
 pp. 184–5, Table, *read* dates—Treaty of Edinburgh, 1560,
 Drake's voyage, 1577–80 (*and delete next entry but one*),
 Drake in W. Indies, 1585–6.
 p. 231, l. 39, *delete* of York.
 p. 337, l. 8, *add* in 1632.
 p. 350, l. 12, *read* though arrested and pillaged was released.
 p. 352, foot, *read* Sheldon, archbp. *after* Juxon's death.
 His.
 p. 366, Table, *read* dates *for* Henri IV, 1580–1610.
 p. 373, l. 8 from foot, *read* 1673.
 p. 376, l. 22, *for* never *read* rarely.
 p. 397, ll. 3, 4, *read* Chief Justice Sir Matthew Hale.
ib., l. 9 from foot, *for* looks *read* books.
 p. 398, l. 24, *read* Gibbs.

p. 182, 2nd paragraph. As this statement has been controverted the following note may be added : *see* Cal. S. P. Dom. for 1581–90, p. 480–1, 1591–4, p. 172, 1598–1601, pp. 5, 173 ; also Acts of the Privy Council, Aug. 12, 1578 ; May 25, 1588 ; 13 Jan., 1597 ; 25 July 1598 ; and many other entries, 1570 to 1598. *See also* Lappenberg, *Urkundliche Gesch. des hans : Stalhofes zu London*. The Hanse merchants possessed other houses in London and elsewhere. They recovered the steelyard before 1636, by which time their importance had greatly diminished, and continued to be landlords of it till the nineteenth century.

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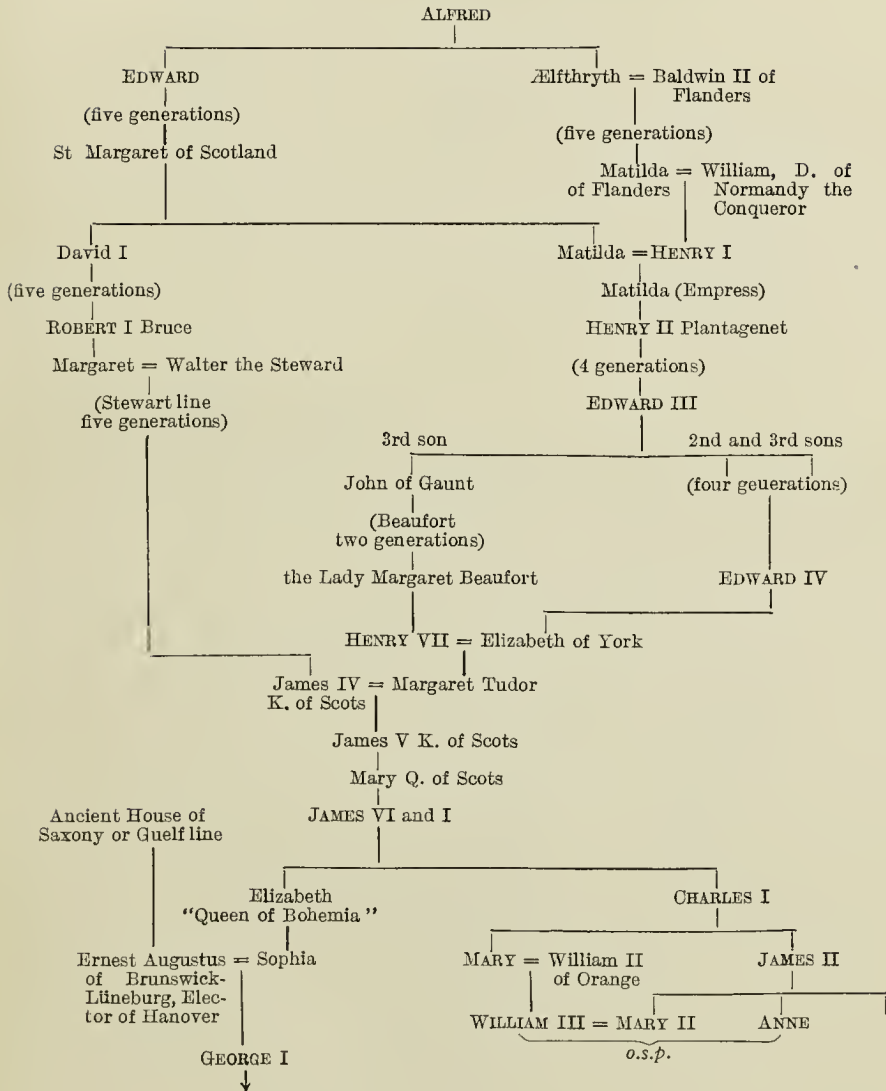
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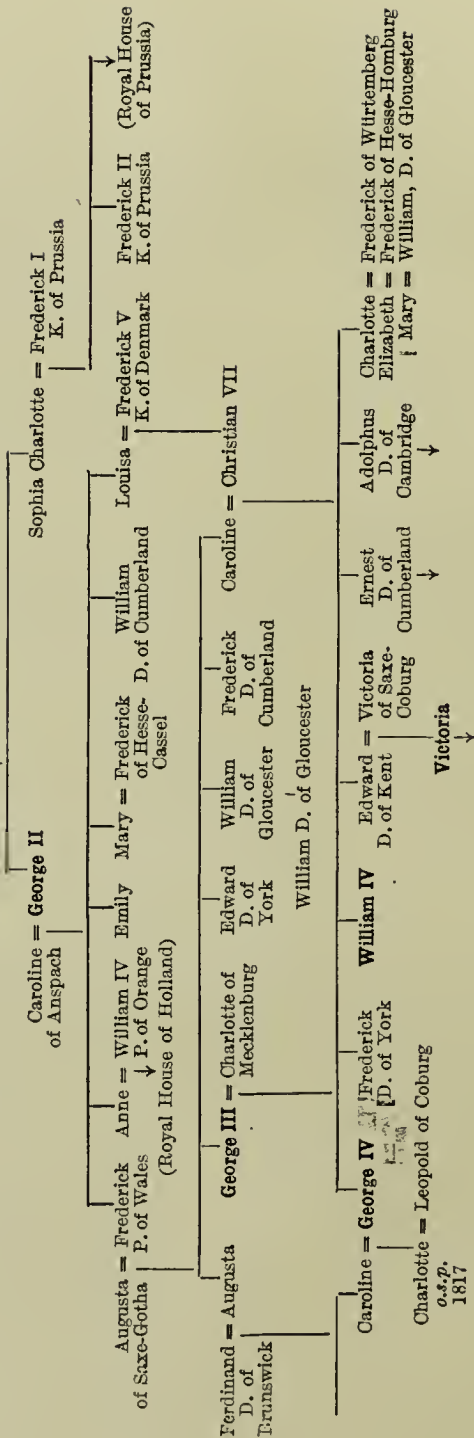
THE ROYAL LINE OF ENGLAND—I



THE ROYAL LINE OF ENGLAND—II

HOUSE OF HANOVER (BRUNSWICK-LUNEBURG) AND CONNECTIONS

George I = Sophia Dorothea
Elector of Hanover of Celle



HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

VOL. III. A.D. 1689 TO A.D. 1834

I

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

(i) CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AGE

THE eighteenth century is perhaps usually regarded in its picturesque aspect. The things with which it was conspicuously concerned seem to us less radically important than the heart-rending questions of the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries, while the problems which it has bequeathed to us are generally laid to the discredit of the nineteenth.

Certainly the period from the English Revolution to the French Revolution (1689–1789) forms a single epoch, marked by characteristics which bestow on it a peculiar definiteness.

This was the grand maritime age of the ‘wooden walls of old England,’ at the close whereof with Trafalgar (1805) the sea-empire of Great Britain was an acknowledged feature of world-politics and history, the age of those ships and sailors which inspired the greatest of English painters and our finest national songs; the great age of colonisation and exploration when, on the lines traced earlier by the pioneers of Elizabeth and the Stewarts, were laid the foundations of a wider empire, when Canada became English—though New England ceased to be so—when the East India Company became a sovereign power in Hindustan, and when Captain Cook surveyed Australian coasts and charted the Pacific. Commercial and colonial expansion was then, as always, involved in war, and as the leading continental Power was France, the result was a prolonged duel between France and England. It opens with the War of the English Succession, which is but the first of a series of wars, begun by Louis XIV and closed by the ruin of Napoleon, all of them, whatever their special causes and titles, forming so many acts in the dramatic struggle of England and France for control of the ocean highways.

Those wars were waged with definite political objects and fought out by professional armies and navies, upon scientific principles. Warfare now developed its own recognised rules of conduct: brutality became less than in older times and true chivalry greater. Tactics, like weapons, naturally altered and improved, but there

is no radical change in type, either on sea or land, from the Boyne to Waterloo, or Beachy Head to Trafalgar.

It is less, however, on the battle-field that we look for the picturesque of the eighteenth century than on the paths of politics, commerce and fashion. There is a general impression that the period of the wig, of powder and snuff, hoops and paint, of duels, minuets and cards, was peculiarly an aristocratic period. We know it too as the age of wit: not even in our own day has verbal brilliance been so highly rated. Politics and erudition shone only by its aid, and it has possibly immortalised them beyond their proper deserts.

The general impression is not altogether unjust if it be taken as signifying that politically and socially England was dominated for a century by the nobility, in distinction from the Crown, on the one hand, or the middle classes on the other. Nevertheless, there is much among the characteristics of eighteenth-century life which is still familiar. If the sedan-chair and the stage-coach be gone, canals yet linger, as do umbrellas, tea, and turnips, clubs and newspapers, operas, chapels, factories, banks and the general apparatus of a city civilisation which had established itself long before Waterloo.

But in the sphere of social and intellectual development the century is not, as in politics it is, a single era. Great alterations began to take place about the middle of the century in the religious, intellectual and social habits of the nation, the decades 1750-70 forming a kind of historical watershed.

The most remarkable fact about the eighteenth century is, perhaps, that these transformations—the Wesleyan revival in religion, the transference of our social system from an agricultural to an industrial basis, the loss of our American colonies and the colossal struggle with Napoleonic France—should all have run their courses within that political framework constructed by the aristocratic revolutionaries of 1689. The testimony to the excellence of their building is the strongest possible.

(ii) THE REVOLUTION

Its Scope

‘The glorious and happy Revolution,’ as the Whigs afterwards styled it, ended the Stewart era and banished at last all the dreams of reviving a Tudor system or an Elizabethan foreign policy. Modern England would neither recognise a Divine Right in kingship nor take Biblical exhortation in the House of Commons for statesmanship. The Revolution opened the door to tolerance and to modern legislation; it forced this country into the front rank of European Powers and colonial expansion; above all, it made a political epoch (and not in England alone) by providing a new type of government, that of a *Limited Monarchy*, ‘limited,’ at first,

solely by restrictions on the royal power, but eventually, by the separation of the Crown from politics and parties.

The revolution of 1688-9 really accomplished—what the Civil War had not—the practical transfer of supreme authority from Crown to Parliament, while nevertheless preserving the outlines and habits of the ancient monarchy, as the Restoration of 1660 had proved to be necessary, in sufficient strength to avoid a fall into anarchy such as had occurred in 1450. This triumph was achieved by an extraordinary combination of the characteristics of a monarchy and a republic.

In the first place, the stability of the State was assured by the preservation of dynastic monarchy (though the lawful heir, the infant son of James II, was displaced for his elder sister). The experience of the Commonwealth had, in fact, convinced the nation that only an hereditary succession could preserve the country from the flood of violence or intrigue which would set in if the Head of the State were elective—conditions of which the kingdom of Poland could offer melancholy illustration at that time, as several modern republics have done since. Moreover, the consciousness in the royal family of permanent possession and responsibility was expected to place a check on that exploitation of public resources for private profit which had under the Commonwealth been notorious and has always been the canker of purely popular elective governments.

In the second place, a balance of powers was established between Crown and Parliament. The King could take no action without the sanction of Parliament, for without it he could obtain neither funds nor forces. This made it impossible for him to maintain in office any ministers whom Parliament did not trust or contract treaties of which it disapproved, and so the controlling power really lay with Parliament.

On the other hand, a reserve of authority in any crisis, and especially if Parliament were not sitting, was left to the sovereign, being precisely that authority which Bacon had called the King's 'extraordinary,' and James I his 'divine,' prerogative and which the Long Parliament had denied. The King had besides always the power of dissolving Parliament, though he was obliged by law very soon to call a fresh one (Triennial Act, 1694). Without the King there could be no Parliament: without Parliament no king could rule.

On this mutual necessity of each to each was based the famous Constitutional, or *limited*, Monarchy of Great Britain (Scotland following the precedent set by England), which for two centuries provided the favourite political model of modern Europe.

Its Champion

The way in which the Revolution was carried out and the long war in which it involved England depended mainly upon the remark-

able man who mounted the throne of the Stewarts, William of Orange, grandson of Charles I.

There is a dramatic irony in the fact that William was first invited to visit England by his uncle, Charles II, who expected to make use of him as a tool in an elaborate intrigue for forcing England into an alliance with France.

William was then (1670) a young man of twenty. His youth had been one long schooling in patience, caution and courage; he had become habitually grave and silent; he was endowed with neither health nor wealth; his one passion was love of his own country and his determination was fixed to defend her independence. He did not lend himself to the purposes of Charles II and left the English court as a failure. On the other hand, his correct conduct and steady attendance at divine worship won him widespread respect and approbation in England, which, a few years later, stood him in good stead. Charles II, in the course of a fresh diplomatic intrigue, again courted William and therefore permitted him to offer his suit for the hand of his cousin, the Princess Mary. She was the presumptive heir to the Crown, after her father, James, and the marriage, in 1677, was hailed with enthusiasm by the English, who were sure that such a Prince Consort would maintain Protestantism: for William had by that time taken up his life-long task. The French threat to annex the United Provinces had fired a popular revolution there, resulting in the proclamation of William III as Stadtholder and principal ruler of the country. Though the office was hereditary in the State of Holland, it was not so in all the Provinces, nor did the Stadtholder possess full royal power. William's position was difficult, but he was the acknowledged leader of the national resistance to Louis XIV, and the unequal fight which he had sustained for five years (1672-7) attracted the admiration of Europe, and concentrated on him the personal vengeance of *le grand monarque*.

At the time of the Exclusion Bill (1680) a large party in England had desired to make William Regent for James, whenever Charles' death should occur, but it was not very likely that the Stadtholder would accept so thankless and exacting a post. He was now a statesman who counted in the politics of Europe, and he succeeded in forming an Alliance (1681) of the United Provinces with Spain, the Empire and Sweden, all of them countries which feared the ambitions of Louis XIV, and this Alliance bid fair to block the French King's paths of conquest. William wanted to obtain the adherence of England to the league and he wanted a united England, with a strong fleet and a good army. He knew that his father-in-law, James II, was anxious to show himself independent of Louis XIV, and therefore did his best to assist James. When Monmouth rebelled William sent to England three picked regiments of Scots which had long been part of the Dutch army. For two years James regularly consulted his son-in-law, who hoped that James' dislike

of French patronage would lead him to countenance the Alliance, as it was by no means founded on a religious basis, but composed equally of Roman-catholic and Protestant States. But he reckoned without James' Jesuit advisers, whose influence was for Louis XIV, and upon discovering that James' religious fanaticism blinded him to statesmanlike views of foreign policy and was leading him towards an understanding with Louis, William began to listen to the Whig overtures. It was as the husband of Mary, heiress to the English throne, that William originally consented to lead the revolution of 1688. He appears to have intended an alteration of the government, without any personal attack on James. But the birth of the infant prince and the flight of James to France left the Whig and Protestant party no choice but a change of sovereign.

Mary, thus unhappily placed between husband and father, believed that her duty to her husband came first, and that religious duty pointed the same way. Though she was for the rest of her life profoundly distressed at supplanting her father, her conscience was too strongly convinced to allow her to waver in action. To her, as to the larger number of her subjects, the contest was essentially for freedom of conscience and of country, William essentially its champion against despotism and a false worship. And to that championship she and William devoted their lives. Diplomatic, taciturn and self-controlled, a pattern of tolerance and moderation beyond any English Whig, William was, nevertheless, the one enthusiast of the struggle with France. That he became a champion of English political liberties was almost accidental, for though he was half English in blood he was less so by nature. He could not understand, far less sympathise with, either the ardent attachment of the English to their Church, or their curious theories (as foreigners thought) about constitutional self-government. In himself he seemed to combine several parties and principles: on the paternal side a descendant of German princes, on the mother's side English, in religion a French Protestant, he was yet in temper and by the traditions of his family essentially a Dutch patriot, and it was in this rôle alone that he won affection and loyalty. He earned a great reputation as a European statesman, building upon the fears and interests of a dozen sovereigns and their ministers an Alliance able to counterpoise the dominant and compact French State. Thus several weak States formed together a *balancing* power with which Louis XIV would have to reckon.

The idea of such an Alliance was, of course, nothing new. It had been tried by the Plantagenets and by Henry VIII; Elizabeth had made a partial success of it now and then; but William III was the first to maintain it as a working force, and he bequeathed it as a political principle to subsequent generations.

(iii) THE THOUGHT OF THE REVOLUTION

"Your *safe* Revolution, you mean," said a sarcastic Frenchman to a boastful Whig. That it was safe, in England itself actually bloodless, resulted from the remarkable unanimity of the mass of the people and the responsible thinking men. The masses were, doubtless, moved by the old religious feeling: they hated popery. When James II forced them to choose between King and Church, they stood by the Church.

The responsible statesmen, on the other hand, were actuated principally by a form of political thought non-religious in character, and we may recognise in the common agreement a proof of the power which books had now come to exercise.

The book which had first directed English political thought along a new road was Hobbes' *Leviathan*, which had been published so long ago as 1650 and, of course, was never a popular book. Hobbes had written of government as a necessary condition of human civilisation, not as a branch of religion. His principles were based on a consideration of what was needful, possible, and wise: not on interpretations of Scripture, or the teaching of the Church. Men, says Hobbes, are, and must be, 'selfish,' in that they seek their own good. In a natural, or wild state, therefore, they would live like animals in a condition of incessant war upon each other; but to have any civilisation there must be some peace and order; some of the natural aims and impulses of the individual will have to be given up, or restrained, for the sake of securing aims common to all, or, at least, to all men of one nation. There is, therefore, a general agreement to have government.

This idea of government as a secular institution for the use and good of the community created a new school of thought, which, however, discarded Hobbes' own particular conclusions. The satirists of the reign of Charles II (*e.g.* Dryden and Butler) made popular the conception of government as a system which might be improved by the people whom it governed. The critical spirit was roused, and the standards of criticism were now, not rules believed to be divinely ordained, but the conclusions arrived at by reasoning. At the same time the moral vileness of Charles' court discredited the principle of the "divine right" of kings as thoroughly as the experience of the Commonwealth and Protectorate had discredited the rule of "the saints" or a selected theocracy.

The principal political thinker of the Revolution era is Locke. John Locke was an Oxford scholar, in youth a student of Hobbes, in manhood an assistant of Shaftesbury, though untainted by Shaftesbury's treacheries and self-seeking. His works, penetrated by the mathematical and scientific temper of the late seventeenth century, were widely read both in England and on the Continent and formed the minds of the next few generations. In philosophy, Locke is known as the founder of psychology; in theological history

he must be considered the chief founder, in England, of the School of Reason. The very title of his book, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, is typical. In political thought, Locke cleared away the poetical and abstract arguments of earlier writers and dissociated government from a theological basis, though by no means from morality. He maintained that the law of God is moral, but that morality must be enforced by human agreement, *i.e.* Government. He repeated that men are naturally born free and equal, but surrender some of this savage liberty in order to have government. He laid it down that Labour provides the primary origin of property and has the first claim on it, but that in modern civilisation other factors too have to be rewarded and regulated. Thus he regards government, not as a system or a person possessing a separate right (as the Tory party held), but as a scheme composed by the agreement of numbers of persons. All Locke's political writings assume that government exists for the good of the nation. It is imagined that a *Social Contract* was virtually made when men invented the idea of government. This *Social Contract* is regarded as a kind of treaty between the people and the rulers chosen by it. If the rulers infringe the 'Contract' it no longer exists, and therefore the ruled are no longer bound by it. This theory would justify revolutions and alterations in constitutions, such as those of 1688-9, and the Declaration of Right could easily be accepted by Englishmen and their sovereigns, after 1688, as the literal contract between this people and the sovereign, viewed by the Whigs as an elected steward.

Henceforward, in England, any claimant or party which aimed at upsetting the throne of William III or his successors would have to show, not a claim to a divine right, but a prospect of improving in some way on the government which they attacked.

Locke's principal works (1689-1700) were widely studied and quoted. They are to the political history of the eighteenth century very much what the works of Newton are to its scientific achievement.

II

ENGLAND AND EUROPE

WILLIAM III AND MARY II (1689-1702)

FROM 1660 to 1714—from the Restoration of Charles II to the accession of George I—England fell into line with the other States of Europe, which were dominated, during that entire period, by the ambition of Louis XIV. Whether they wished it or not, these States found themselves compelled either to resist or to submit to French mastery, and upon their fate depended also the fate of those regions in America and in the East and West Indies which had become the colonies, or spheres of influence, of Spain, France, England, Portugal or the United Provinces respectively. Naturally the States which resisted France combined together and the wars which raged from 1665 to 1714 were really all phases of one war. It was this long struggle which developed the maritime strength of Britain and cradled her maritime empire.

Under Louis XIV it seemed as if FRANCE were repaying the dire injuries which she had suffered from Spain and Austria in the sixteenth century. Already Richelieu and Mazarin had secured a slice of Spanish Flanders and considerable gains in Lorraine, and it was now the aim of *le roi soleil* to extend the frontiers of France to the limits suggested by geography—the Alps and the Rhine. If he could hold the passes of those mountains and the mouth of that river he would command the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the land roads into the German States and Italy.

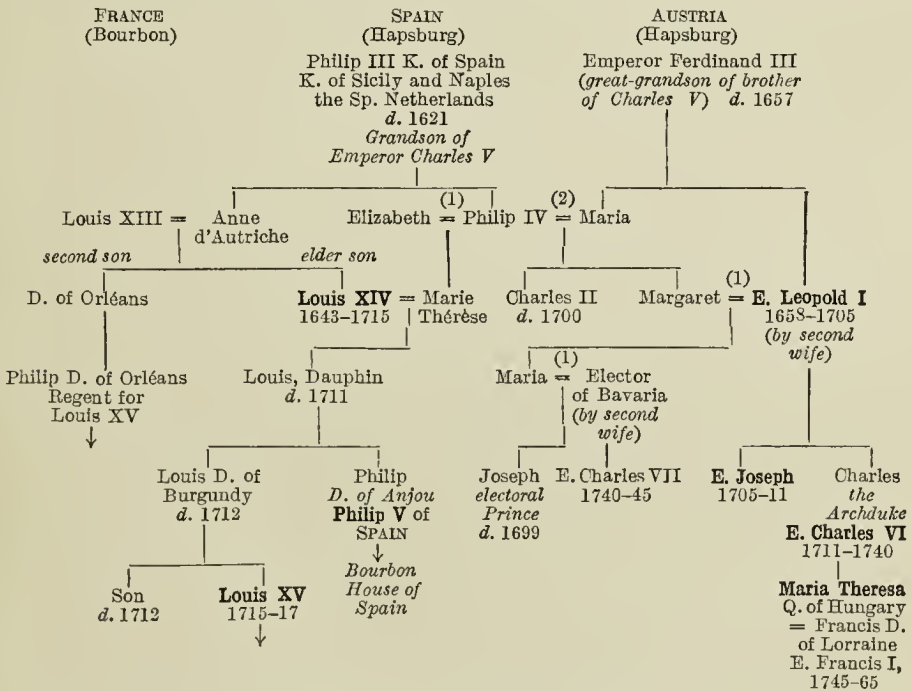
This ambitious scheme meant, first, annexing those Low Countries now named Belgium and Holland, known, respectively, in the seventeenth century as the Spanish Netherlands and the United Provinces (or Dutch Netherlands); secondly, the north-western edges of the Italian Alps which formed the Duchy of Savoy; thirdly, the borderlands of the Rhine—Franche-Comté, Alsace, Lorraine and Luxemburg, a tangle of small feudal lordships, free cities, and bishoprics (including the famous towns of Strasburg, Metz, Nancy, Verdun and Liège), which were all of them nominally States of the Empire. These tiny States were too small to be able to preserve their independence; the various bishops and counts clung to the Empire in the hope of retaining their personal sovereignties, while the populations were, from ties of commerce,

culture and convenience, much more inclined to France. These conditions had persisted throughout the Middle Ages.

The EMPIRE was still a collection of several hundred States with hardly any joint interests and no political bond of union but the person of the Emperor. Each ruler tried to increase his own wealth either at the expense of his neighbours, or by hiring out his troops to some other sovereign. The Thirty Years' War had exhausted the resources of the German States and embittered their relations towards each other, so that whether reckoned all together or singly, they were far inferior in strength, as well as in civilisation, to their smaller but more compact neighbour France.

The Emperor himself was powerful because he was Archduke of Austria, King of Bohemia, King of Hungary, and head of the House of Hapsburg. Since 1516 that House had ruled also over Spain, and for a time in Portugal. But a series of marriages had resulted in Louis XIV of France being an equally near relative to the Spanish royal family, and just about the time when Louis XIV was taking the reins of power into his own hands (1660) the failure of heirs in the Spanish royal house seemed likely to afford him a brilliant opportunity of securing some of the power and territories which he and his nobles and ministers coveted.

THE SPANISH SUCCESSION AND BOURBON AND HAPSBURG ROYAL HOUSES.



SPAIN was then under the sceptre of Charles II, a miserable invalid whose death might be expected any day. He was childless,

and his only near relatives were the royal princesses of France and Austria. As early as 1665, Louis XIV had asserted that the Spanish Netherlands ought to have devolved upon the Queen-consort of France, Charles' half-sister, and had begun the war of conquest which terrified the Dutch into the revolution of 1672 and so, first, restored William III of Orange to the position of Stadtholder, next, enabled him to become the statesman and general of half Europe. Difficult as was the formation of the Grand Alliance, it was even more difficult to raise the lukewarm political sentiment of England to the point of actually making war, but unless William could do this the Alliance would not save the freedom of Holland. It was for the sake of obtaining England's assistance in the Alliance and the war that William took the risk of leading the English Revolution, and the entire Continent watched his adventure with excitement. The English had long ago earned among other nations the reputation of the most fickle and ungrateful folk in the world, and it might well happen that they would but use William to serve their turn and then discard him.

But Louis XIV could hardly have played better into William's hands than he did in exhibiting himself as the champion of James II. If the Stewart king was to be replaced on his throne by means of a French fleet and an Irish army, the most indifferent of William's new subjects would hardly stomach such insults to the national pride and security.

England, then, joined at once *the Grand Alliance* (1689), Parliament voted ample taxes and large levies of men, and William III, with his habitual courage, left the unsteady throne which he had but just ascended to command armies, year after year, in Ireland or the Netherlands.

To Louis XIV it was of the first importance either to keep England neutral in the European war, or to obtain her friendship, and replacing James in London would have been his best blow at the Alliance.

The question of the English Succession became, therefore, a part of the great European struggle. The crown of England conveyed also the kingship over Ireland, and though Scotland was still in name, and in everything except practice, a distinct and separate country, it did not occur to anyone, either in these islands or on the Continent, that the three kingdoms could be separated.

In Ireland alone was there any likelihood of a majority espousing the cause of James II. England appeared to be unanimous against him; in Scotland the small but active band of 'Jacobites' (as James' adherents were promptly nicknamed) could accomplish little more than a brilliant protest, closed by the death of Dundee at Killiecrankie (July 1689). To Ireland, therefore, Louis XIV directed his most hopeful effort on behalf of the Stewarts. Even if it should not succeed, a diversion which would keep the troops of England and the soul of the Alliance so far away from the Low Countries was in itself most valuable.

Unhindered by any English fleet, James II, bringing with him a French general, a party of French officers, some munitions and a little money, landed at Kinsale in March 1689, and was welcomed warmly in Cork and Dublin. The population of Leinster, Munster and Connaught quickly declared for him, and only in Ulster did the Scottish and English protestant 'plantation' offer a real resistance, confined to Londonderry and Enniskillen. The French officers, however, were not able at once to form the untrained Irish into good enough troops to storm those slight defences held by resolute men. Londonderry, in spite of the readiness of its governor to surrender, and the treacherous delays of Kirke, who was in charge of the fleet sent to relieve the little place, held out many months, till Captain Leake insisted on leading the relieving squadron, broke the boom across the harbour, and thus raised the siege (July 1689).

The men of Enniskillen routed in open fight the Irish force when it at length attacked them, at Newtown Butler, and thus the Irish Protestants had saved the all-important months while England was gathering her slower forces. When, however, William's trusted general Schomberg (an exiled French Protestant) brought the English army to Ireland, it proved to have been supplied with bad provisions and was attacked by pestilence, so that for many weeks it could take no action. Nevertheless, Louis XIV was finding it difficult to sustain this dispersed war and could not send to James the troops for which he asked till the next year, 1690. By that time William himself had arrived with larger English forces, determined to end the Irish diversion at all hazards. He marched on Dublin, and fought at the crossing of the Boyne a little action which proved to be decisive, small as were the numbers concerned (July 1690).

James II fled back to France; William with the brilliant young Lord Marlborough overran the south of Ireland triumphantly, until news of a sweeping French naval victory recalled the King to England. This battle of Beachy Head gave Tourville command of the Channel, as he proved by burning Teignmouth, and the panic which swept London had some excuse. National vanity, encouraged by party rivals, took it for granted that a defeat at sea must imply treachery in the Admiral, and the fact that the Dutch fleet had borne the brunt of the action and suffered proportionately deepened the disgrace. But the truth was that the English fleet was by far inferior to the French, as well in the number as the quality of the ships. There had been a long neglect under Charles II and however good had been the intentions of James II, his administrators had hardly executed them. Lord Torrington (Herbert) therefore designed to execute defensive manoeuvres in the Channel, keeping Tourville continually on the watch without allowing him to profit by his superior fleet.

This skilful design Torrington was prevented from carrying out by the interference of the Council in London, which practically ordered him to sail out and fight. After the disaster he was tried by a naval commission, which pronounced him guiltless; but William

dismissed him and gave the command to his rival, Russell, of whose negotiations with James II he was not aware.

While William's hands were still tied by the war in Ireland, Louis XIV, who had the two great advantages of an absolute command of all the resources of France, and of operating on interior lines, had struck rapidly at the other members of the Alliance. His generals were victorious on the Spanish and the Italian frontiers, in the Spanish Netherlands, where he himself took possession of the great fortress of Mons, key of the district, as well as along the Rhine, where he had asserted a far-fetched claim upon the Palatinate by causing that flourishing region to be laid waste with fire and sword and the tombs of the mediaeval emperors at Spire to be destroyed. The dreadful misery produced by this deliberate cruelty was then unusual in warfare and roused a depth of moral indignation against the French King such as was rare in the political wars of this era. It showed the same ferocity as had been exhibited some years earlier on the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by the dragonnades in the French protestant districts.

Louis' victories, and the secret advances which were being made to him by eminent men in William's service (Torrington, Russell, Shrewsbury, Marlborough, Godolphin), naturally inspired James to make an effort to recover his throne by a direct attack upon England. Louis supplied troops, money and a powerful fleet to convey the expedition (1692). But Admiral Russell, though he had permitted a French fleet to sail to Ireland unchallenged, refused to allow Tourville to dominate the Channel ports. If the French fleet came to attack England, he had told James, he must fight it. He kept his word, and his more whole-hearted subordinate, Sir George Rooke, turned the encounter in the Channel into a decisive victory by pursuing the French men-of-war to La Hogue and destroying twelve of them by boat attacks in the shallow coastal waters. The unhappy James was near enough to witness the feat which made his invasion of England impossible, and with a dogged pride actually boasted of the achievements of "my brave Englishmen" in defeating his protectors.

While this battle of La Hogue (1692) restored the credit of the English navy, William, in the Netherlands, lost Namur and was defeated at Steinkirk (1692) and at Landen (1693). But his tenacity and resourcefulness snatched from the French generals the fruits of their victories. Indomitably fighting a defensive and often a losing war, he devised an audacious naval offensive which, in the next reign, was destined to result in making England the foremost maritime Power of Europe. William's genius and foresight amply repaid to this country whatever advantages she somewhat grudgingly afforded him.

This, the first offensive naval war deliberately planned by this country, requires some explanation. In time of war English admirals had two prime duties: "to protect the trade," and to

injure the enemy by raiding his ports or seizing his merchant fleets. Such was the tradition of the navy handed on from its Elizabethan founders of hardly more than a century before. *The trade* meant merchant ships which frequently sailed in fleets. Neither merchant nor naval vessels expected to be at sea in the winter storms, nor could they keep at sea for many months together, but must resort to well-fitted harbours to clean their bottoms and execute repairs, as well as constantly touch at friendly ports to get fresh water and food. The ships of Rooke, Shovell and Benbow were much larger and better than those of Drake, but they still had the same conditions to face. The construction, during the seventeenth century, of ships built solely for war added to the two prime duties of our admirals a third, which promptly became the most important of all—to find the enemy's war fleet and destroy it, a game which the French admirals frequently foiled by declining to try pitched battles.

The fact that France possessed two sea-fronts, on the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, provided British admirals with a standing puzzle: where were the French fleets? In 1693 Tourville tricked the English admirals into sending off the Smyrna fleet (the English, Dutch and Baltic merchant ventures to the Levant) with far too small a convoy, and then fell upon it unexpectedly from his secret lair in the Portuguese haven of Lagos, and did great damage, in spite of Rooke's gallant defence. The next year William executed his master-move by despatching Russell to hold the entrance of the Straits of Gibraltar, where, with the permission of the King of Spain, our ally, he transformed Cadiz into an English harbour and dockyard, so that the fleet could be stationed there all the winter. Russell was indignant at being kept away from home so long, but he obeyed orders, much to the surprise and relief of the Council of English ministers, and so was able to prevent the French fleet of Toulon from combining with the fleet of Brest. For an English fleet thus to close the Mediterranean continuously was a new thing. French admirals had counted on waiting till a bad storm, or the approach of winter, should drive the English fleet away, so that they might sail when the coast was clear. This permanent English fleet, much like a distant blockade, wore down their patience and resources, and the strain drove Louis to risk a second time the forlorn hope of an invasion of England by James II. The threat was successful enough, in one sense, for the gathering of French ships at Calais scared the English Ministry into ordering the Cadiz fleet home; the French fleet then at once raced out of Toulon and the Duke of Savoy in terror accepted the French terms and deserted the Alliance. These events proved that one grand fleet was insufficient for this country, and thenceforward the Admiralty was expected to provide more ships and men. Russell, like many other gallant admirals throughout the eighteenth century, was too often crippled at sea by want of proper vessels and

munitions : " For as the navy of England is the most certain security to the country, so it is a service neglected till every petty thing is provided for."

The two chief antagonists were too evenly matched for Louis to continue the war with advantage. France, he knew, was already " perishing to the sound of Te Deums " (as one of his ministers told him), and he now made overtures for peace. The English nation also was weary of war, of constant attacks on commerce by privateers and of the heavy taxation. It was believed that England was now safe and that Italy and Spain did not matter, so negotiations for a peace were begun. By the *Peace of Ryswick*, 1697, Louis XIV for the first time gave up some of his conquests and his avowed plans. The principal terms were : —(1) the King of France recognised William as King of England, Scotland and Ireland, and pledged himself to lend no aid to his enemies (*i.e.* to James II). (2) He restored to Spain most of the Spanish Netherlands, and to the Empire many of the places conquered in Lorraine, though not Strasbourg. (3) The safety and the commerce of the United Provinces were safeguarded.

But it was clear to the far-sighted that this peace was only a lull in the struggle since it could not provide Charles II of Spain with an heir. William, however, endeavoured to settle the question of the Spanish Succession by negotiation. The War of the English Succession had raised him to the height of his reputation, and he used all his influence to persuade the rival sovereigns of France and Austria to a compromise. In 1698 the *First Partition Treaty* was agreed to. The young Electoral Prince of Bavaria was to succeed to Spain, the Indies and the Netherlands; the Duke of Anjou, the younger grandson of Louis XIV, to have the crown of the two Sicilies (Sicily and Naples); and the Emperor's younger son, the Archduke Charles, Milan. But no sooner was the treaty accepted by all the parties than the boy prince of Bavaria died, and William set to work again to try to avoid a war by obtaining the consent of the rivals to a *Second Partition* (1700). By this plan the Archduke Charles was to inherit the major dominions—Spain, the Indies and the Netherlands; the Duke of Anjou was to have the Sicilies and some Tuscan towns, and the King of France, in order to reconcile him to the larger share of the Hapsburg, was to get Milan, and then to exchange it for the long-coveted Lorraine. This second arrangement was, however, never carried to a final treaty, for neither the King of France nor the Emperor would bind himself, each hoping that the dying Spanish King would make a will in his favour.

What really mattered was the possession of Spain itself, for Spain meant, or would mean to a king of ambition, sea-power in both the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, with the power of shutting the gate between them. For this reason both William and his English Council looked with alarm on any prospect of a French prince at

Madrid, and William had clearly told Louis XIV that in such an event England would require a harbour of her own in the Mediterranean, and suggested Minorca with its excellent haven of Port Mahon. This was not, as might now be thought, an anti-national arrangement, for the people of the Balearic Isles detested alike the French and the Spaniards, and had offered to acknowledge the Archduke Charles as King and to welcome an Allied occupation, so as to maintain their own independence and prosperity. But it would have meant so effectual a bar to the maritime ambitions of France that Louis could never suffer it, and bitterly must English admirals and statesmen have rued the hasty relinquishment of Tangier by Charles II's Parliament, only some fifteen years before.

William's negotiations were severely hampered by the jealous English Parliament, which insisted that as the war was over the army must be disbanded and the Dutch Guards sent home. Upon seeing his enemy thus disarmed, Louis, naturally, ceased to be conciliatory, and renewed his preparations for a fresh war of conquest. He cleverly obtained the goodwill of the Spanish Queen and clergy, who controlled the dying King of Spain and his government, all of whom were furious on learning of the plans made by foreigners to divide the Spanish dominions. When the Queen heard of the Second Partition Treaty she flew into such a rage that she smashed everything in her chamber. In consequence, when Charles II of Spain at length died, towards the close of 1700, his will bequeathed the entire dominions to Philip, Duke of Anjou, and the Spanish nation endorsed the decision. The provinces of their monarchs they naturally regarded as their own, albeit they had no strength to hold or to rule them. "They will rather deliver themselves up to the French or the devil, so they may all go together, than be dismembered," as the English envoy told his government.

Louis XIV made public the tidings in his most dignified manner. Assembling the court and the foreign envoys, he had the doors of his private cabinet suddenly flung open, showing the lad Philip, clad in Spanish costume, seated upon a throne. "Gentlemen," said the old King, "here is the King of Spain."

"Il n'y a plus de Pyrénées," said the courtly Spanish ambassador to the King of France. But it was to the Spanish Netherlands that Louis XIV marched his army in his grandson's name, while at his orders the Spaniards set to work on the fortifications of Cadiz, Gibraltar and Port Mahon in Minorca. "What will become of the Protestant religion and the commerce of the English and Dutch?" cried an anxious German prince, and the whole of the English and Dutch asked the same question. But England now had no army, and Parliament was absorbed in party contests. The young Duke of Gloucester, the son of Princess Anne, had died just before the King of Spain, and the English Succession itself was now unsettled beyond Anne's lifetime. Louis might well dream that the English and Spanish successions could both be decided together, and by himself,

and when James II also died, in September 1701, he saluted the disinherited Prince of Wales as "James III," and thus contemptuously tore up the Peace of Ryswick. At the news, a storm of anger swept the English people. Resentment against the old enemy who had so easily tricked them, a scare over the Mediterranean commerce, a determination to support our injured ally, Holland, or a shamed recognition that King William had been in the right all the time, fired one or other of all the different classes of the nation, so that the new Parliament of 1702 met the King with entire sympathy, resolute for war, and rapidly voted all the necessary preparations. 'The Pretender' to the throne was attainted, and ample money supplies provided, but the vanished veteran army could not be recovered by a vote. While enlistments, training and munitioning were in progress, William began again to frame a Grand Alliance (1701) with the Emperor and other German princes; then, on the threshold of the great struggle, with his dominions united behind him as they had never been heretofore, he was accidentally thrown from his horse, and a few weeks later he died (March 1702).

To those who took long views William III was the pioneer of a statesmanship which would secure the freedom of small countries and the religious worship of minorities from the tyranny of an ambitious military Power: the man who, though his life was spent in war, had pointed out a method whereby peace might be secured without submission to despotism—that slavish yielding to a conqueror's orders which Louis XIV, like later tyrants, termed 'peace.' An intelligent combination of the smaller, or weaker, nations against the greedy leviathan might succeed in so 'balancing' it as to deter it from venturing on war, and for considerable periods, when the alliance was honest, this system actually succeeded: a *balance of power* meant peace; only when the balance was lost did war break out.

But to the majority of Englishmen during his own lifetime William was in the first place a foreigner, and therefore disagreeable. A foreigner who was extremely useful, even indispensable, to this country, but whose services did not entitle him to gratitude or even decent civility. In the view of the masses, his acquisition of the status of Englishman and King must surely be sufficient reward for any services. The political party leaders, if Whigs, regarded him as their own choice, who ought to be content to be their puppet; if Tories, as the embodiment of their rivals' principles.

The lively pen of one of the few Englishmen of the age who could see beyond the streets of London, castigated the prejudices and ingratitude of his fellow-countrymen in the biting satire of *The Trueborn Englishman*, but Defoe was hardly a strong influence in politics.

III

THE SETTLEMENT OF CHURCH AND STATE

WILLIAM III (JANUARY 1689–MARCH 1702)

AND

MARY II (JANUARY 1689–DECEMBER 1694)

IT is the main interest of the reign of William III, at home as well as abroad, that several modern problems and characteristics can be clearly distinguished and followed up. Especially is this the case with respect to the principles of government—or Constitution.

(1) In the STATE :

(a) Supreme power, from 1688, is finally and avowedly shifted from the hands of the Sovereign to those of Parliament. Government, though still essentially monarchical in form, is in temper and methods markedly aristocratic, not by any means popular.

(b) Two great parties (Tories and Whigs) become recognised; their leaders take office by virtue of a parliamentary majority and lose office without being in danger of losing their heads.

(c) The finance of government is at last recognised as a national business and not the King's personal affair. The Bank of England is founded and the institution of a *National Debt* gives a 'stake in the country' to others besides landowners, incidentally providing a useful form of investment which largely increases *capital* in the sense of a store of money which can be drawn upon for industrial undertakings.

(d) Toleration becomes the principle, and increasingly the practice, of government towards differing religious views, so that separate bodies of worshippers are able to organise themselves unconnected with the Church, and therefore the identification of the State with the Church, though formally retained, is no longer entirely genuine; the identification is retained rather for the sake of the government than of the Church, the distinction between political and religious questions being perceived with increasing clarity.

(2) In the CHURCH :

Nothing but the deliberate treachery of Charles II and James II towards the nation they ruled could have brought

about the revolution of 1688. The experience of 1640-60 had convinced the great majority of Englishmen that their happiness and liberties were bound up alike with the monarchy and with the most comprehensive of the national institutions—the Church. Their conviction of the sacredness and necessity of *Church and King* was not unlike the national sentiment under Elizabeth, or the three Edwards, or the House of Alfred, and for twenty-five years it had maintained Charles II on the throne in spite of his own conspiracy against the religious and political liberties of the people.

But when the bulk of the thinking part of the nation perceived that James II was actually pitted against the Church and intended to transfer its authority and revenues to the feared and hated Romanists, a dilemma arose which the nation solved, not, as James expected, in favour of the Crown, but by bringing about a sudden alliance between those two interests, or sections, of the nation which during the period 1640-80 had been opposed, viz. the Church (which had always supported royal authority) and the political opposition to the Crown, known as the *Whigs*. The latter, though in a sense representing the old anti-royal party of civil war times, had now learned better than to try to uproot the monarchy, and aimed only at placing further restraints upon it.

The Churchmen, however, had to face a much harder modification of principle, for since 1649 their most eminent leaders, including most of the bishops and the University of Oxford, had maintained the principle of *Non-resistance*, in case of misdoing by the sovereign, because the *divine right* of the hereditary sovereign placed him above control by his subjects. In 1688, therefore, a cleavage took place in the ranks of the Church-and-King party. The larger number held that the liberty of the nation was an issue greater than the consistent maintenance of an absolute hereditary right. They were as entirely opposed to Romanism as were the Whigs and could accept, as a new starting-point, the Whig parliamentary resolution (January 1689), “*That it hath been found by experience to be inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a popish prince.*”

But a number of the champions of Church-and-King, led by Archbishop Sancroft and Bishop Ken, and including many other distinguished clergy, held consistently to their principle. They had already suffered, under James II, for their passive resistance to certain of his commands which outraged their consciences, and they were equally resolute in offering a passive resistance to Parliament and the new (and, as they held, usurping) sovereigns. They had, at their institution, taken an oath of allegiance to King James and they could not accept the claim of a Parliament to abrogate this vow; they would not, therefore, take the oath of loyalty to William and Mary, although, on the other hand, they would not work actively against the national decision.

Five of those Seven Bishops whose protest to James II had

opened the gates to the tide which swept him away thus refused their support to the Revolution, preferring to be deprived of their sees. For three years William and Mary put off the deprivation, hoping to persuade them to acquiesce, but in vain. Four hundred of the parish clergy followed the example of the bishops, as did a number of excellent men in both Universities. They and their small following of laymen were termed *Nonjurors*. As they declined to take the oaths of allegiance they could hold no office in State or Church. They maintained voluntarily and quietly their separate congregations, but they stood outside the public organisation of the Church of England, and their position of pure renunciation and negation was hardly inspiring. Among the 9000 parishes of England their numbers were not dangerous to the new government, but this cleavage within the Church marks a certain coarsening in both Church and State. The State became, in fact, essentially secular. The old idea of a religious sanction of King and government was by the Revolution Parliaments ignored, though for the sake of influencing the mass of the people Church and State were still regarded as politically closely united. It followed that the Church itself became politically modelled and to some degree secularised, especially after the events of 1713-14 which so greatly strengthened and extended the results of 1689. *Erastianism* (the subjection of religion to the direction of a secular government) had been a charge often unfairly hurled at the English Church from Tudor times. With the accession of William III, a Dutch Calvinist, even more out of sympathy with the Church of the English than with their other institutions and customs, it acquired some obvious justification. The bishops and clergy who could conscientiously hold preferment under William appeared, beside the Nonjurors, like politicians, although among them were the revered Stillingfleet and Beveridge and Archbishops Tillotson (*d.* 1694), Tenison (*d.* 1715) and Sharp, of York (*d.* 1714).

The desire of William III was that the Church should effect a union, or *Comprehension*, with the protestant Nonconformists, but as neither side was ready to 'compromise' cardinal principles, this project for an external unity died at once (1689).

All that Parliament could do was to free the Nonconformists from the legal penalties inflicted on them under Charles II. Even as to this, in spite of William's wishes, the *Toleration Act* (1689) did not repeal the so-called 'Clarendon Code.' It only exempted protestant dissenting ministers from the penalties of the four statutes, if they would take specified oaths of loyalty and make declarations against Romanism; Romanists, of course, obtained no relief, and it was to guard against them that the Corporation and Test Acts were left in force. As to these Acts, a makeshift exemption was arranged for Nonconformists, who were (until 1711) allowed to evade the two Acts by receiving on one occasion the Sacrament according to the rites of the Church, a proceeding called *Occasional Conformity*.

They were permitted to assemble for worship if their places of meeting were formally registered either before the Bishop's registrar or the Justices. This stipulation was made in order to prevent disaffected persons, or those whose persuasions were considered by all parties to be anti-Christian, from meeting secretly.

The State no doubt suffered by the purely political element being left without any balance; it became obviously secular and any appeal to other than material considerations soon came to be thought hypocritical.

Turning to the details of the CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES, it becomes clear that the Revolution produced much more alteration in the government of England than a simple change of sovereigns or alterations of ecclesiastical theory and appointments. It was not, indeed, designed to bring about a change of dynasty at all, since Mary had long been regarded as her father's heir. In 1688 numbers of people believed that the infant Prince of Wales was not really the child of James and Mary of Modena, but a baby 'smuggled' into the palace 'in a warming-pan,' so that the coronation of Mary and William in 1689 appeared to them only an anticipation of the natural succession, and the birth in the same year of Anne's son, William, Duke of Gloucester appeared to promise a Stewart succession. The constitutional importance of the Revolution lay in the sweeping restraints placed upon the royal prerogative by the Bill of Rights, the Mutiny Act, and the Triennial Act (1694), which plainly transferred all the active power of government to Parliament.

The principal points of the *Bill of Rights* were: (1) that the "pretended power of the Crown" to suspend laws or dispense with their execution "is illegal"; (2) that creating such courts as the Court of Commission for Ecclesiastical causes "is illegal"; (3) the levying of money by the Crown in any manner and raising troops without the consent of Parliament "is illegal." (4) On the other hand, Protestant subjects are expressly permitted to keep arms for their own defence, and subjects may freely petition the King. (5) Free election of members of Parliament and freedom of speech in Parliament are asserted. (6) Several safeguards for just administration of the law are enacted, a matter extremely urgent if the sovereign could no longer suspend or dispense. (7) Finally, the hereditary descent of the Crown henceforward is affirmed, with careful restrictions to ensure that neither the sovereign nor his consort should ever be a Romanist. Mary and William were declared to be joint sovereigns, the survivor to reign till death. After them, and supposing them to leave no children, the order of succession was to lie in Anne and her children.

It followed, by the second provision, that the Crown possessed no method and could devise no method of controlling the Church. As to the third, scarcely had the sovereign been stripped of his prerogative powers over the army before circumstances compelled

the hasty compilation of the *Mutiny Act* (1689) to enable him to keep one. Soldiers were still to be kept in order by martial law, though they were to be paid by ministerial authority. This act, in deference to the dread of a standing army felt since Cromwell's time, was only to hold good for one year, but as throughout William's and Anne's reigns an army continued to be necessary, Parliament had every year to be convoked to continue it, an accidental but sufficient reason for an annual session.

The *Triennial Act* (1694) provided for a new Parliament at least every three years, in order to prevent the sovereign or his ministers from obtaining personal influence over members such as Charles II had acquired in the Restoration Parliament.

The two great political parties kept the nicknames, respectively Scotch and Irish, given to them in the time of Charles II, of *Whigs* and *Tories*. But the meaning had somewhat changed. The *Tories* were now those who regretted the changes of 1688-9, though they had acquiesced or even helped in them. They had not wished William to be King, though they could find no other practical solution of the political problem, and therefore, grudging him the royal position, they rejoiced to curtail his power and dignity. Their reason for supporting the Revolution settlement at all was their attachment to the Church and dread of Romanism. They detested the Dissenters and suspected both them and the Whigs of being republicans at heart. Many of the country gentry, especially old royalist families, were Tories.

The Whigs had inherited the tradition of parliamentary opposition to the Crown from the days of Charles II, but they were now more directly moved by philosophical argument or by family ambition. Their leaders were the wealthy noble families, the rank and file was composed of the new squires (dating from the Commonwealth), and of successful merchants and lawyers, some of whom obtained peerages from Charles II. Dissenters were, naturally, always Whigs.

There occurred, therefore, a divergence of interests and feeling between most of the great landed families and the majority of the squires, who represented the older landholding families, while a political combination existed of the Whig nobility (or the great families) with the mercantile classes.

A system of PARTY GOVERNMENT emerged naturally from these conditions of political life. The sharp distinction between the two parties at first made it difficult to form a strong Ministry. William considered that the Crown ought to be above party, and in his first Privy Council and Ministry he tried to include members of both. The Tories were led by the experienced Godolphin and Finch, Earl of Nottingham, an ardent churchman. The Whig leaders included the arrogant Wharton, the ill-tempered Russell, the eloquent and learned Somers and young Charles Montague, who soon proved to have a talent for understanding finance. Somers,

an able lawyer, belonged to a Worcestershire family; the rest were noblemen.

Both Whigs and Tories dreaded the influence of that extremely able and versatile reprobate, the Earl of Sunderland, a politician who had helped to engineer some of the most disgraceful acts of Charles II and the most unscrupulous ones of James II, and who now hoped to secure his own safety and fortunes by repenting in the private council-room of William. But the King was too discerning to entrust power to a man so much detested. Government by an impartially mixed Ministry did not, however, prove to be practicable because, as Parliament now wielded the executive as well as legislative power, it was necessary that ministers should command a majority of votes if they were to carry on a government. Indeed the impossibility of combining the two parties in one Ministry was promptly exhibited by the attempts made in Parliament by the Whigs to inflict penalties upon persons who had been the agents of the arbitrary acts of Charles and James. Their efforts inclined the King, who was bent upon amnesty for the past and tolerance in the future, somewhat to the Tories. He tried to gratify them by creating Danby Duke of Leeds; another Tory, Colonel Lord Churchill, he made Earl of Marlborough to please the Princess Anne, whose excessive attachment to the Earl's wife was already of some political importance.

The Whigs, however, were naturally far more ardent in support of the war and of the King himself than were the Tories, and when the latter exhibited their party spite by hampering the financial measures and by intriguing with the Jacobites and the French, William was compelled to dismiss first one, then another Tory minister, and so came at last to rely upon a Ministry entirely Whig (1697). Though he considered this to be of the nature of a defeat for himself, and though sarcastic critics sneered at 'the Junto' of Whig leaders as if it were a questionable clique, it turned out that a Ministry composed from one party only—the party which was supported by a majority in Parliament—was a good solution of the problem presented by two opposed political organisations within Parliament. Thus, then, began the series of party Ministries, a plan based on the assumption that there were two, and only two, parties in the political organism—a system which lasted for the next two centuries.

The prime necessity for a permanent government was sound FINANCE and this was secured when Charles Montague (afterwards Earl of Halifax) provided a national bank into which taxes should be paid and upon which the government should draw without having to ask continually for loans. Montague recognised and adopted, as a responsibility of the government, the old debt due to the goldsmiths of London from Charles II. The Crown had, at that time, perfidiously refused to repay the loans made to it upon the date which repayment was promised, but had offered to go on paying interest. This

Charles, as a matter of fact, had never regularly done, but William's government paid punctually.

Encouraged by the new government's honesty, the merchants and capitalists of London, who were all Whigs in politics, promised a fresh and very large loan which was not to be repaid at all, but on which the State would continue to pay interest. The two debts, the new and the old, were 'funded' as a *National Debt*. A *funded* debt is one for which the national taxes are the pledge, the interest being perpetual if the principal is not repaid. If any individual lender wanted his capital back, he could find some other capitalist who would pay him the money down and would take over, himself, the debt for the sake of getting the interest, as was the custom with the shares, or *stock*, of a joint-stock company. The National Debt came to be called *The Stocks* and the private transaction was simply a selling, or buying, of government stock. Originally, Montague promised to pay to the lenders *annuities* (or annual payments) of 10 per cent. until the redemption of the loan, but afterwards it was agreed to make the interest less, but permanent.

This National Debt, the interest being provided out of the taxes, was evidently safe so long as national solvency lasted. It satisfied the men who believed that the Revolution settlement was a permanent one, and offered a very profitable investment to them.

In order to secure and reward the capitalists, and also in order to be able to obtain more loans when wanted, the financiers who lent to the government were formed into a company, with directors of their own, who were given the privilege of being the national *Bank of England*. The Bank had certain specified taxes assigned to it, which were to pay the annuities, or interest; it was empowered to make bank notes and to advance money and otherwise deal in purely financial business and in bullion.

No part of the new project was altogether new: the Italian cities had long ago devised joint-stock banks, while systems of credit and bills of exchange were as old as the Jews. But the system arranged by Montague, on the instigation, apparently, of a Scotch financier, Paterson, and modelled particularly on the Bank of Genoa, was on a scale of public guarantee never seen before. The greatest risk which the scheme ran was the rivalry, at its very beginning, of a Tory opposition bank, called the *Land-bank*, which was intended to be supported by the security of the estates of landowners. Put to the test of actual business, however, the Bank of England, supported by far-seeing and substantial business houses, proved to be both able and willing to advance to the government the huge sum of two millions (1697) required for its military undertakings, while the Tory bank was unable to provide any sum of the kind and came to an ignominious end. At the same time, the Whigs proved the firmness of their determination by voting a heavy tax on incomes drawn from landed property, known as the *Land Tax*. It was paid expressly for war expenses at the rate

of 4s. in the £ of rentals. Being levied on all landowners, it fell, of course, on Tories as well as Whigs, but at all events upon the rich, not the poor. Afterwards it was lowered to 2s.

The success of the Bank of England, of Montague's reform of the coinage (which was superintended by Somers, Locke and Newton), his invention of Exchequer Bills, and a parliamentary re-organisation of the East India Company, all strengthened enormously the prestige of the Whig party and of King William whom that party supported. This East India Company was in reality a new company formed by a patent from Parliament (1698) instead of from the Crown, although William had lately renewed the patent of the original Elizabethan company. This proceeding, whereby Parliament practically deprived the Crown of its ancient authority over commerce and foreign enterprise, was an echo of the merchants' quarrel with the Stewart sovereigns about monopolies and patents, and the injustice which Parliament inflicted on the original East India Company was only put right by amalgamating both societies in one, on a broad basis which much increased the Company's energy and capital.

The Bank of England and the remodelled East India Company both afforded opportunities for investment which were grasped at by all manner of persons, who henceforth had a direct interest in the permanence of the Revolution settlement of England, since, if it should be overturned, the Bank, certainly, and the Company, probably, would vanish with it, as Addison artfully explained to simpler heads in his deft little Essay on *A Vision of Public Credit*. This new scope for investments also reduced the competition for purchasing land and the tendency to hoard, and in all these ways prosperity was increased and therewith a solid support obtained for the new sovereigns and the new system of government.

It was of the first importance for William and his government to find such support among the mercantile classes, for among the aristocratic party leaders treachery was active during the first half of the reign. The very ease of their success seems to have made the leaders of the Revolution nervous. Perhaps they might be as easily displaced by a reaction, in which case their heads and their family fortunes would be lost. Accurately judging that William could not venture to punish, even if he could discover, their falsehood, several of them had almost immediately begun overtures to James, as a kind of insurance in case a successful Jacobite landing should place William's throne in danger. Even Shrewsbury refused to remain a minister of the King he had done so much to crown, and was secretly listening to the seductions of the "court of St. Germain." This was the polite term for James II and his exiled courtiers, Louis XIV having bestowed upon him, with magnificent generosity, the palace of St. Germain near Paris and a royal establishment. The worst double-dealer, as suspected by William but by hardly anyone else, was the Earl of Marlborough.

MARLBOROUGH, a man of great ability and supreme military

genius, accomplished and handsome, was also a man supremely selfish and insatiably ambitious of fame and wealth. His famous wife, Sarah Jennings (who seems to have set the standard for the typical arrogant Duchess of English story), was a personage at least as ambitious and callous as her husband. John Churchill's path to rank and power had been first opened by the disgrace of his sister, and he became a trusted officer of James II. His wife thought she had secured a firm hold upon the future by becoming the favourite and oracle of the Princess Anne (aged twenty-four in 1688). Anne's quiet, worthy husband, Prince George of Denmark, was a man totally without political and public instincts, and on all such questions the Princess accepted Lady Churchill's opinion as law.

When the Churchills, in 1688, perceived that the tide of national indignation was likely to place Mary and William on the throne, Anne had, at Lady Churchill's instance, left her father's roof and declared for her sister and brother-in-law. But when Lady Churchill deeply insulted and offended Mary, Anne became equally spiteful towards the Queen.

William had at once recognised Churchill's great ability, and made him Earl of Marlborough, but whether or not it seemed to the Marlboroughs that William's reign would keep them too long from political sway, Marlborough early set on foot an intrigue to deprive the King of his Dutch friends and advisers, and perhaps of something more. William's devoted servant, Bentinck, Earl of Portland, discovered the affair and Marlborough was dismissed (1692). His next piece of treachery was more decisive, though William and the Whigs never knew it. Marlborough actually sent to James, as did Godolphin, information of the English plans for an attack on Brest harbour which William had arranged to take place at the same time as Russell's stroke at Toulon (1694), and the utter failure of the attack, the destruction of the troops and of their able general, Tollemache, was the result of this perfidy. The death of this gallant rival, and the death, in the same year, of Queen Mary, having removed the personal obstacles in his path, Marlborough again reverted to William's service, which, after all, offered larger opportunities to ambition, and William, who was never moved by recollection of personal injuries and who recognised Marlborough as the ablest officer in England, advanced him to high command and initiated him into all the political and military complications of the Grand Alliance. Thus he provided a political heir to conduct the great struggle for another generation, and seldom has history recorded so successful an intellectual bequest, for when William passed away, as he had himself anticipated, before the final and fiercest struggle with France had begun, Marlborough took the reins from the dead King's hand and continued with consummate skill to direct William's political, military and naval scheme to its triumph in 1709.

If England did not secure all that his and her efforts might have entitled her to claim it was partially due to the moral flaw in the character of this extraordinary general, one of the most perfect military geniuses Europe has known.

During the violent Tory reaction which set in on the conclusion of the Peace of Ryswick, Parliament occupied two years in insulting William. His Dutch guards had been deported to Holland, and his grants to a few Dutch and French officers, who had staked their all in his cause and that of the English Revolution, especially Bentinck and Ruvigny (Earls of Portland and Galway), were actually cancelled by a parliamentary Act. Incidentally, this mean piece of ingratitude made Parliament, not the Crown, controller of the Crown lands.

But when the Tories in the Commons proceeded to a further step of party revenge by announcing an impeachment of the Whig leaders—Montague (now Lord Halifax), Somers, Russell and Portland—the House of Lords on the one side and the independent voters on the other made it clear that they would not countenance such an excess of faction. The freeholders of Kent, not for the first time, had the courage and energy to draw up a petition to the House of Commons itself, which they besought to “turn your loyal addresses into bills of supply,” and so enable his Majesty “powerfully to assist his allies before it is too late.” The majority in the House, conveniently forgetful of recent history, voted that the Petition was *scandalous, insolent and seditious*, sent the five gentlemen who presented it to prison, and declared that the *Habeas Corpus* Act only applied to arbitrary arrests by the sovereign, not by Parliament. The Five Gentlemen, however, proved as staunch and as victorious as the Five Members or the Seven Bishops, for the instant effect was to produce a shower of further petitions in support of that of Kent. At the same time the House of Lords negatived the Commons’ demand to exclude the accused peers from the House of Lords before they were tried, a piece of injustice which, on previous occasions (as Strafford’s impeachment), both Houses had perpetrated. The consequence was a quarrel between the Houses, the collapse of the impeachments, and the progress of a Whig reaction which led to the Whig Ministry of 1702 and the declaration of war upon France.

This failure of the Tory tactics caused a tacit understanding among political leaders that the violence of party strife must be confined to quarrels within their own bounds, and not involve fresh revolution over the destiny of the nation as a whole. This was made clear by the *Act of Settlement*, 1701, drawn up after the death of the little Duke of Gloucester. The Crown was then settled, after Anne, upon the nearest Protestant descendant of James I, Sophia, daughter of James the First’s daughter Elizabeth, the celebrated Queen of Bohemia. Sophia had married the Protestant Elector of Hanover and their son George was a Protestant and friendly with William.

But the prospect of a fresh foreign sovereign gave excuse for some more restrictions on the Crown which implied a censure of William. The Act provided that no future sovereign might quit the British Isles without permission of Parliament; that England was not to make war for the defence of the foreign possessions of her sovereign; that aliens, even if naturalised, were not to be capable of sitting in the Privy Council or in Parliament, or of holding military or civil offices, or grants of land. Additional safeguards for the independence of justice and of Parliament were devised: Judges were to hold office during their lives, unless both Houses petitioned the Crown against them, and members of the House of Commons who accepted office under the Crown, or pensions from the Crown, were obliged to vacate their seats, a rule which proved so inconvenient that it was neutralised by the plan of the retiring member being immediately re-elected. This, too, proved so troublesome as to lead to a whittling down of the regulation to apply only to important offices, so that within half a century it was quite easy to bribe members whether by places or by money.

IV

SCOTLAND FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE UNION (1688-1707)

(i) THE REVOLUTION (1688-99)

THOUGH she had, politically, a considerable leeway to make up as compared with England, Scotland in a score of years accomplished a stride from the semi-mediaeval to the modern age.

The Restoration gave her back the monarchy far stronger than it had been before the Civil War, and Charles II found the Scottish episcopal system a more powerful aid to royal authority than that of England. But James II had, while Duke of York, exhibited in Scotland the most odious side of his character, his deliberate cruelty, and as king he used the same methods. After the failure of Argyll's rising the rebels were punished with the utmost barbarity.¹ The Cameronian zealots were still pursued mercilessly and exempted from the benefits of the Declaration of Indulgence, which the Presbyterians, who were by it suddenly relieved from persecution, described as "the courtesy of Joab to Abner." They saw through the royal design to obtain their support for Romanising purposes more clearly than did most of the English Nonconformists and they let the government know their mind. When the tidings of William's menace to James II reached Scotland, the Chancellor, the Earl of Perth, a Drummond, who had become a Romanist, found the Scottish Council lukewarm in the military preparations which he ordered to be made, and he appealed to the Presbyterian ministers to stir up a loyal spirit. They replied that though the King had lately been used as Heaven's instrument to do them good, yet as they were convinced that he favoured them only with a design to ruin the Protestant religion, they desired to be excused from giving pledges to the King, "saving that they would conduct themselves in this juncture as God should inspire them."

James desired the Scottish army to march to England under Douglas and Graham of Claverhouse, now Lord Dundee, and the latter was zealous to fight for his sovereign. But the English officers refused to serve under him, and on James' flight Dundee returned to Edinburgh, hoping to save the Scottish kingdom for him. There, however, a Convention was already sitting, as in London, preparing to dispose of the Crown, while William had

¹ See Vol. II, p. 382.

despatched General Mackay with a small force of Scottish soldiers which had previously been serving in Holland to protect Edinburgh from the royal garrison in the castle. Freed from fear of coercion, the Whig party in the Parliament proved the stronger and carried its resolutions :—That James had assumed the throne of Scotland without taking the appointed oaths, had innovated on the constitution of the kingdom and tried to violate the laws and liberties and to alter the religion of the kingdom, and therefore had forfeited the Crown. The Crown was then settled upon William and Mary and their children, should they have any, and next, upon the Princess Anne and her children.

Dundee rode away, as the immortal song tells, through the West Port and summoned the clans to fight for their King.

But the brilliant day of Killiecrankie was only a momentary triumph, for Dundee fell, and though the garrison of the Bass Rock gloriously held out for three years (1691–4), there was no serious opposition to a revolution which made Scotland more independent and her Parliament more free and powerful than ever before, and which established the popular Presbyterian system as that of the Church of Scotland.

As in England, the Revolution triumphed so easily that its difficulties were not at once apparent. The *Lords of the Articles* and the sovereign's control of Parliament by their means were now abolished, nor did William III ever occupy the autocratic position of the Stewarts.

(a) The *Highlands* offered the first crisis. The clansmen had given up Romanism long since, but they had accepted the episcopal Church, which was recognised by the Stewart kings, and the religious grievances or mercantile ambitions of the Lowlands were nothing to them. Their chiefs regarded the accession of William as, at best, a necessary evil and were slow to acknowledge him unless from inducement or coercion. To William, intent on bringing England into the Alliance against France, the Highland clans of Scotland seemed to call for little time and attention. He left that country to such eminent Scots as were able and willing to hold it for him, and signified his approval of their plans.

Proclamation was made that the chiefs must take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary before the 1st January, 1692, and at the same time some money was sent to be distributed amongst them. Probably no Scottish official of those days could have risen above using his position to pay off old scores. At all events, Sir John Dalrymple, one of William's ablest agents, did not. A chapter of accidents afforded a technical excuse for sending "letters of fire and sword" (an order for execution) against a small body of the Macdonalds, those of Glencoe, who were unpopular among their neighbours as being both thieves and Romanists. Cautious perfidy was used and nearly the whole of the clan of Glencoe were deliberately butchered. The Jacobites and the personal enemies of the

Dalrymples made an indignant outcry, which has echoed through history (a good proof of the habitual mildness of British government), but William, who seems to have considered a forcible lesson as not undesirable, took care to protect those who were responsible for the massacre.

(b) The *Darien* scheme, the failure of which was hardly William's fault, plunged him in even darker unpopularity than the Glencoe massacre. Scottish commercial interests were apt to suffer from English jealousy, and the suggestion that Scotland should set on foot a separate colonial venture of her own seemed to William a promising one and of the nature of a reward to the commercial middle class which had been the strength of the Scottish revolution.

The inventive William Paterson, a London merchant of Scottish birth, was the chief organiser of a Scotch company chartered to trade "to Africa and the Indies" and to settle colonies anywhere in Asia, Africa and America. The King's commissioner in Scotland, Lord Tweeddale, even promised that his Majesty would deal with any foreign State which should molest it. But the East India Company was instantly up in arms and the English Parliament protested. William hereupon disavowed his over-hasty commissioner, and then the Scots accused the new King of meanly sacrificing their interests to English jealousy. A fresh sphere of enterprise, however, was discerned by the persistent Paterson on the Isthmus of Darien (once the hunting-ground of Elizabeth's buccaneers): "the door of the seas and the key of the universe," as the Scottish promoter called it, and a place, too, where there were no English competitors and no European residents. The Darien Company was rapidly floated, Scottish merchants subscribing to it as a point of patriotism and honour. But Paterson had no knowledge of the Isthmus, and it did not occur to him that the Spaniards might have good reasons for never maintaining a port on the place which seemed to him to command two oceans. A large body of colonists, totally ignorant of tropical climates or Spanish claims, sailed to Darien, and began to build a town, which they named *New Edinburgh*. They expected to make the Isthmus the focus of the world's commerce on both oceans.

But Nature and Spain were both against them. Pestilence swept away most of the first body of colonists, the remnant got on board ship and fled to New York. A second band arrived at the deserted works only to be expelled by a Spanish force.

The Spaniards, who, from the days of Drake, were generally accepted as the white sovereigns of the entire Isthmus, were furious at this contempt of their rights, and their rage was particularly unfortunate for William, who at that precise time (1699) was endeavouring to reconcile the Spanish government to his plans for a partition of their empire. The Scots were even more enraged at the terrible fate of their compatriots and the loss of their capital and hopes. They insisted that their new king had again sacrificed

them to England, and William, perceiving that such antagonism between the two kingdoms was inherent in the political separateness of their governments, became convinced that a Union of Scotland and England as one kingdom was an imperative necessity. But there was at the moment no chance of such a Union.

(ii) THE UNION (1707)

In the last months of William's life he urged upon Marlborough, whom he believed to be the future real ruler of England, the need for a Union of the sister kingdoms. Early in Anne's reign, her ministers were convinced by the anti-English proceedings of the Scottish Parliament that the necessity was indeed urgent.

In 1703 that Parliament passed an *Act of Security* declaring that a successor to her Majesty should be chosen from among the protestant successors of Scottish kings, but not the same person as should be chosen to wear the crown of England, "unless there be such conditions of government . . . as may secure the honour and sovereignty of this kingdom . . . from English or any other foreign influence." In particular, no future sovereign was to have power to declare war without the approval of the Scottish Parliament.

Next year Lord Somers astutely drew up the English reply. Resolutions of the English Parliament, which were promptly turned into Bills, declared that henceforward Scots should be treated as aliens, though under a law of James I they had long been automatically naturalised in England. The exchange of Scottish cattle and English woollen goods was forbidden; Scottish linen was excluded from England and the English colonies; and the English border towns were to be put into a defensible condition. Such plain reminders of what they stood to lose brought the Scots to reason, and in 1706 the two Parliaments agreed in requesting the Queen to name a Commission which should frame recommendations for a Union of the two kingdoms.

The *Act of Union* of 1707 is Somers' chief title to fame. His calm, fair temper and long views made him an admirable negotiator. The English were ready to grant generous terms as to commerce and finance in general, but, though this was undoubtedly the first consideration with the Scots, the Union involved on their part a serious sacrifice of dignity and pride. They at first suggested a simple *federal* union (each kingdom to retain its separate laws and administration), but quickly agreed to a real unity. Two sets of commissioners drew out together in 1706 full Articles for a Treaty of Union.

The question of the Scottish national religion was left entirely to the Scots themselves, the established Scottish Church, therefore, was recognised as being Presbyterian, a natural consequence of the course of events which had identified the Presbyterians with the

Whigs and the Protestant Succession. But the Scots imposed no tests or political disabilities upon Episcopalians.

On the question of finance England was generous. Scotland was to take over a quite small share of the National Debt and to pay taxes on a lower scale than that of England. All posts and offices, political or other, were accessible to both peoples. Commerce and, above all, the colonial trade, was freely flung open to the Scots. The English government bestowed a round sum of nearly £400,000 (known as *the Equivalent*) to be expended in compensating the shareholders in the unfortunate Africa Company, in defraying the cost of a new coinage—a great boon to the nation—and in stimulating fisheries and manufactures. On the other hand, the Customs duties had to be increased to match those of England, which meant higher prices and led to much smuggling, while it proved impossible to persuade Scotland to the *excise* on malt or ale. Parliament solved this problem (1713) by voting the tax, ministers privately promising that it should not be collected. It was thus shelved for a dozen years.

As to representation in the joint Parliament, Scotland was to send to Westminster twelve lords chosen by the Scottish peers and forty-five members for the House of Commons, a reasonable proportion considering her far smaller population. Scotland obtained one-eleventh of the entire representation but was to raise only one-fortieth of the revenue.

There was, naturally enough, some popular feeling against the Union, shown by riots in the old Covenanting district of the south-west Lowlands, where English bishops were called ‘priests of Baal,’ as well as among some of the Highland clans, who remembered Glencoe, in Edinburgh, which feared to sink into a mere provincial town, and among the lesser nobility, hitherto so influential a class in the Scottish government. The wagons bringing *the Equivalent* were greeted by the mob with howls of “Judas money!” and the ministers of the Crown thought civil war imminent. But the Scots realised that the Pretender and the King of France alone would gain by a rising, while the vehement anti-Unionists hated Romanism worse than they hated England. Admiral Byng was cruising between the French and Scottish coasts, and though Louis XIV had prepared an expedition, it hastily put back again to its own ports.

In the last Scottish Parliament, when the Bill for the Union was submitted, the powerful Duke of Argyll was a strong Unionist; the leading peers of the resisting side, Athol and Hamilton, had quarrelled, and the Articles of Union, on which the Commissioners of both nations had agreed, were voted by considerable majorities.

In England, popular feeling was entirely in favour of the Union, and the Houses cared not to haggle over details which might offend the Scots and cause them to reconsider their Act. The Articles, therefore, passed the English Parliament rapidly, and Anne gave the

royal consent personally in March 1707. On May 1st, 1707, the two kingdoms of England and Scotland officially accepted the title (used already unofficially since James I) of GREAT BRITAIN, while the two national flags were skilfully merged together in the earlier form of the world-famous *Union Jack*.

V

THE REVOLUTION AND IRELAND

(i) CONDITION OF IRELAND IN 1685

(A) *Political and Racial Difficulties*

To take up the history of the relations of England with Ireland in the eighteenth century is to take up again the threads of all the olden discords, but worse entangled than ever.

(a) No invaders had ever conquered the island completely, but all had left descendants to fight interminably against the other racial groups. The animosity (to go back to old times) between the seaport colonies of the early Norsemen and the tribes of the hills and forests provided puzzles not only for Henry II, but for Henry VII and Elizabeth. Never could any native chief, from Brian Boru to Edward Fitzgerald, secure steady and united support against either invasion or authority.

(b) Tribal chiefs, party leaders, English deputies and generals, all must first achieve the preliminary feats of retaining followers and obtaining supplies. Native leaders fostered savagery among their subjects, as the surest antidote to the civilising efforts of English administrators; English rulers and soldiers had to secure support in London; so that from the time of Henry VIII the Irish policy of every government was hampered by all kinds of English political considerations, party or personal.

(c) The geographical position of Ireland compelled every English sovereign to secure it as a postern gate of the national fortress, through which Spain or France might else (like Danes or Scots of old) aim a deadly blow at England.

(d) The great impulses from more civilised countries usually reached Ireland only with failing strength and enthusiasm and tarnished by secondary motives. In the sixteenth century Protestantism showed itself mainly as a movement of confiscation and materialism, and the consequent Roman-catholic revival chiefly as an anti-English lever.

It followed that all who were aggrieved by the English rule and the Anglo-Irish ¹ (and episcopalian) aristocracy who worked it, were zealous Roman-catholics, and that their religion was fused with their racial and political feelings.

¹ *Anglo-Irish* is in this book used to signify descendants of English families who lived in Ireland, whether or not there was admixture of Irish blood.

Still worse, the English puritan party, in the seventeenth century, had insisted that *all* Roman-catholics were pure Irish, and ought all to be punished for the massacre of 1641, and for being royalist. Their obstinacy in persisting in this confusion helped the sweeping injustice of Cromwell and his officials and actually accomplished a union, which had not hitherto existed, of the Roman-catholic Anglo-Irish with the pure Irish. That is to say, religious divisions became the same thing as political divisions, and so remained.

There were still distinct geographical districts. For though the mediaeval 'Pale' of English, or rather Anglo-Irish, inhabitants had ceased to be a formally recognised district, none the less a preponderance of Anglo-Irish families and interests was to be found in the seaports of the east and south and the country houses and estates which lay round and behind them. The far west was an entirely native region; the midlands were for the most part Irish as to the masses, but Anglo-Irish, in patches, as to landowners. But a third nationality had, during the first half of the seventeenth century, established itself in the north, in the form of considerable Scottish colonies, which settled in the then half-deserted lands of Ulster, colonies of stern Presbyterians, hardworking and self-governing. Finally, the Republican era had scattered a number of ex-soldiers, and of speculators and adventurers, up and down the eastern half of the island. In fact, the successive revolutions in England and Scotland were marked in Ireland by successive confessions of land and colonies of English-speaking Protestants, and the so-called *Settlement* under Charles II, by its arbitrary and unjust decisions, only added an increased bitterness to the mutual hatreds of the various sections of the population.

By the time of the Revolution, then, the Irish problem was already threefold: (A) racial and religious, (B) agrarian (how the land was to be owned and tilled), (C) political (the relation to Great Britain, bound to be altered afresh by the Revolution).

The five types of inhabitants have been already distinguished:

(a) The native Irish, the most numerous, poorest and least civilised. The chiefs of the most important tribes, O'Brien, O'Neill, O'Connor, had long kept up some political connection with the Anglo-Irish lords.

(b) The Anglo-Irish of the old epoch, before Henry VIII. Some of these had kept in touch with England and adhered to the national English Church, of whom the Butlers were the most conspicuous. But most had intermarried with native Irish families, remained attached to the Roman religious system and had connections of policy, as well as kinship, with Irish chiefs: the most conspicuous of these were the great families of Fitzgerald, Fitzmaurice, Plunket, Nugent.

(c) The Tudor settlers and the *undertakers* (or contractors) from Elizabeth to Charles I. The founders of these colonies had got, by gift or purchase, grants of land in Ireland from the Crown or

its agents when some large confiscations had been decreed. They were all officially of the English Church. As a rule some capitalist or favourite (such as Raleigh) had tendered for a wholesale grant, and had then sold or leased portions to smaller speculators or colonists. Among these capitalist owners appear the City of London, the town of Liverpool, and the families of Boyle (Earls of Cork, Orrery and Burlington), Beresford, and Stewart (Londonderry and Castlereagh), and among the earlier Tudor settlers the doubly famous name of Wellesley (or Wesley).

All these, as well as their tenant-settlers, were primarily commercial, hoping to make profits by farming or wool-growing or even manufacture, or else, if they were landlords, by the rents drawn from the estates sublet. The actual residents in 1688 were, naturally, the descendants of the original settlers, who were, themselves, separated by three or four degrees of grant or sale from the original grantees.

(d) The Ulster settlers from Scotland already mentioned, Presbyterians and intensely puritan in temper, much like the colonists of New England. The English administrators of Ireland regarded them with disfavour, as Nonconformists and probably Republicans. They themselves were enemies almost equally to native Irish and Anglo-Irish. It was they who developed most successfully the linen manufacture and fisheries which had been founded by Strafford.

(e) After the rising of 1641 and the Cromwellian conquest there arrived a further immigration of contractors' settlers. Grants of land in Ireland having been lavishly used by the Republican Parliaments in lieu of money, it followed that soldiers and other payees were forced either to emigrate or to sell their assignments to speculators who bought them up. Among the largest of the grantees and speculators were the families of Petty, Coote and Cromwell, the Restoration 'settlement' having merely transferred some of the estates to fresh holders, especially to James, Duke of York, and the ever-successful Russells.

(B) *The Agrarian Difficulty*

(1) Every confiscation and every suppressed revolt meant a great slaughter of the Irishry, and the theory of the Government doubtless was that the lands granted or sold to English and Scotch were vacant. In fact, however, the savage Irish population increased again rapidly, while their expulsion and a re-settlement could only be carried out by many thousands of fresh immigrants. But settlers (as in the Middle Ages) came over slowly and scantily, and being arrived and finding their allotted estates for the most part wild land, they looked about (as in the Middle Ages, or in modern Colonies) for labourers to do the heavy manual work, and found only the natives.

The lands, then, which by the government schemes, and according

to the maps which can be made of them, were supposed to be 'English' were often English only as to owners and masters, all the labourers, servants and small sub-tenants being natives.

(2) To the purely Irish the governments of the seventeenth century had finally assigned only the north-west of the island, Connaught, a barren land of bogs and hills, totally unable to sustain a large population. The native Irish, in any case, did not want to devote themselves to tillage. The assumption of English legislators and *undertakers*, that the people, English or Irish, would fall upon the land with spade and plough and zealously grow food upon it was not based on experience. Ancient Romans and eighteenth-century Americans alike had slaves, and Anglo-Irish farmers hired labourers; but the native Irish wanted to live by herds of half-wild cattle, and by hunting, fishing and otherwise ransacking wild nature. Like the Red Indians in America, their system of subsistence required vast expanses of open country and was not compatible with British farming. This fact lay at the root of the Irish massacres of the settlers from Elizabeth's time, as of Red Indian massacres in Virginia.

Not much corn (oats) could be grown in the native districts, but the newly introduced *potato* proved to be peculiarly suited to the soil and climate, and its cultivation, being so easy, spread over the entire island till it had become in the eighteenth century a main food of the masses. Even so there were periods of famine, nor was the past systematic destruction of trees (particularly under Cromwell) ever repaired.

Ireland was not capable of supporting by bad agriculture alone a large population, but the manufactures begun by Strafford and recommenced by the Scotch in Ulster might prove to be of great assistance if time and fair chances were allowed.

(ii) THE REVOLUTION WAR (1685-92)

James II brought about a temporary reversal of the religious and racial system. Ever since 1641 the English Parliament and people had persisted in confusing the old Anglo-Irish with the natives, because of their religion, now the same assumption produced favour to all Roman-catholics and disarmament of all Protestants. James hoped to form a purely Roman-catholic army, with which he should be able to coerce England, and this force was rapidly formed and trained while the older *militia*, which had been under the control of local gentlemen, was disbanded.

When, in 1685, the Earl of Tyrconnel (Richard Talbot) was sent over by James II as Viceroy and General, dismay overwhelmed the more recent settlers, known as the *New Interest*, who from every port and in every kind of boat fled to England. Tyrconnel armed, besides the Irish army, large numbers of irregulars, known as *raparees* or bandits, and let them loose to plunder. They burned

the houses of the Anglo-Irish, drove off what cattle they could, and slaughtered the rest—to the number, it was estimated, of four or five hundred thousand.

Those protestant inhabitants who could not escape by sea tried to reach Ulster, where alone there seemed to be a possibility of self-defence. Ulster had already lost a considerable number of families in consequence of the persecution of Nonconformists under Charles II, but those who remained were determined men and had organised themselves. They prepared to hold out behind the slender fortifications of Derry, Enniskillen and Ballyshannon, and on hearing the tidings of the movement of 1688 in England, they promptly proclaimed William and Mary.

The turning-points in the Succession War in Ireland have been already noted (Chap. II. p. 11), but it remains to be considered that it engaged Ireland in a movement more largely national than she had ever known. In the cause of their religion, their land and their king, the Anglo-Irish of the *old* party and the Celtic natives could not help combining against the *New Interest* and the new English king, who was a Protestant and a Dutchman. Unhappily Ireland could not be dealt with apart from Great Britain by either side or either king. James had far stronger rights and interests in England and Scotland than in Ireland (which he could only claim as an appendage of England), and that island could be to him but a base for reconquering his principal dominions.

William, whose sole object was to fling England into the scale against Louis XIV, knew that he must make England safe on the Scotch and Irish sides before he could take a man to the Continent, and he found England infinitely more concerned about Ireland than about Scotland—in which no English capital or colonists were involved, and which was not seriously disaffected to the Revolution. For several years James II had been demonstrating to England that Ireland was to be his weapon for establishing his arbitrary rule and the Roman Church, and it was utterly impossible for the English, with lessons at home so recent, and the persecutions of Louis XIV actually in progress, to regard James' Irish supporters with any feeling but that of vindictive terror.

The opposition between James' own interests and those of his Irish subjects was revealed as soon as the Irish Parliament, which he at once summoned, assembled in Dublin (May 1689). Both Houses naturally represented only the *old* landowners (Anglo-Irish and Irish): they proclaimed freedom of worship for all, repealed Poynings' Law, repealed the Act of Settlement of Charles II (the old landowners thus resuming their possessions before 1642) and passed a sweeping Act of Attainder, to deprive over two thousand persons, of all classes, of life and property. It could hardly have been expected that the sons of men robbed and outraged as the Irish Roman-catholics had been should have refrained from taking some revenge, but the action confirmed the desperation of the

protestant party. It was instantly clear that bloodshed would be remorseless. When the Ulstermen won the fight at Newtown Butler they slew the flying Irish without mercy.

William's arrival in Ireland (June 1690) was signalled by bells and bonfires all over Ulster. Dublin then had its taste of panic, and flung into prison hundreds of the Protestants who still remained. The army of James, now consisting partly of French reinforcements and partly of hastily trained Irishmen, tried to protect Dublin from William's attack by contesting the crossing of the Boyne river, and a sharp fight there decided the war. Schomberg was killed and William very nearly hit by the French gunners, but a fine charge carried the ford and recovered the day.

The French general, St. Ruth, seeing that the day was hopelessly lost, withdrew the remnant of his troops beyond the river and persuaded James to leave the field. He rode to Dublin and, as the story goes, met Lady Tyrconnel (sister of Lady Marlborough), anxiously waiting for tidings, with—"Madam, your countrymen have run away." "If they have, Sire," she replied with a curtsey, "your Majesty seems to have won the race."

The ex-king, unable to think of any other expedient, took ship from the south coast for France, while William entered Dublin. From this point the fortunes of Ireland depended on the English Parliament and the policy of Louis XIV. The latter had now no expectation of a Stewart restoration in Great Britain, but he could make use of the Irish war as a powerful diversion of English energies and a clog on William, and this was the part which the Stewart royal family and the Jacobites were destined to play for half a century. The French troops under the Comte de Lauzun were therefore recalled, but the Irish troops, under the heroic Colonel Sarsfield and St. Ruth, were enabled to continue fighting by supplies of arms; they ensconced themselves in Limerick on the further bank of the Shannon, and William in vain tried to carry the place by assault. His failure there, and his return to England, which could not be longer postponed (1690), greatly encouraged the native resistance.

William, for his part, was hampered by the discovery that Parliament in London would not allow him a free hand. He had proclaimed, after the battle of the Boyne, pardon and "protection" to the common soldiers in the Jacobite army as well as to farmers and artisans, if they would lay down arms and go back to their homes, but no terms were offered to the gentry, whose estates were re-confiscated at once. They, in consequence, were driven to continue fighting in sheer despair, while the lower classes, whom William had amnestied, found his pledge dishonoured. His own soldiers (half of them English, half Dutch) were suffering the traditional fate of troops in Ireland in being left unpaid by the English Parliament. They could only subsist 'on the country' (by plunder), and committed much outrage and cruelty. The whole

populace, therefore, was thrown on to James' side and helped the *rapparees* to conduct a fierce guerilla war. The purely protestant and English party collected in the towns of the south-east, and it seemed as if the old arrangement of 'The Pale' had returned.

But it was necessary for William to end the Irish war rapidly; if the English Parliament would not allow this to be accomplished by politic leniency, it must be done by force. Ginkel, his devoted Dutch general, and Lord Marlborough were provided with sufficient troops and guns and an English squadron was sent to support them. Marlborough's rapid capture of Cork and Kinsale (1690) was the first evidence of his military genius. In 1691 Ginkel attacked the Irish and French troops in their fortified places of refuge, Athlone, Galway and Limerick. The first was strongly held by St. Ruth, who is said to have boasted that it was so strong that "his master ought to hang him for trying to take it, and mine ought to hang me if I lose it." But by combined skill and daring Ginkel captured Athlone and, soon after, Galway. St. Ruth fell on the battle-field of Aughrim, and Limerick alone was still held by the desperate courage of Sarsfield and his Irish.

The three *Lords Justices* who had been left by William, according to the regular constitutional system, to govern in Dublin had already issued a proclamation of pardon to those who surrendered at Galway, and Ginkel followed their example in offering honourable terms to Sarsfield and his gallant troops.

THE ARTICLES OF LIMERICK, briefly summed up, promised—
(a) a choice for Sarsfield's troops of entering William's army, going home, or being conveyed to France, with their families and moveables :
(b) free exercise of the Roman-catholic religion : (c) a series of concessions to all the Irish landholders and soldiery in the west, which the Lords Justices undertook to get legalised by the Irish Parliament, and which included complete amnesty, the possession of their ancestral homes and property, abolition of the protestant oaths which had been imposed, and general tolerance.

On these excellent terms Sarsfield surrendered, just in time for William, for directly afterwards a large French fleet arrived with troops and supplies which might have renewed the war triumphantly.

All the French could now do was to help to transfer the Irish regiments to France, where they founded the famous Irish Brigade of the French army. But Limerick gained the melancholy name of the *City of the Broken Treaty*, for the English Parliament and the Anglo-Irish protestant party in Ireland practically annulled it in seven years' time, though it had been drawn up by Ginkel with the assistance and authority of the Lords Justices.

The English Parliament proceeded at once (1691) to cancel the promise as to oaths by enacting that no Roman-catholic could be eligible for any office or seat in Parliament in Ireland. The next

Irish Parliament, therefore, contained only men of the *New Interest*, and in the years 1692-9, by a series of detailed measures it revoked all the stipulations of the treaty, William being helpless before the solid votes of both Parliaments and unable to combat their usurpation of power because he depended on parliamentary votes for his European war.

VI

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND (1689-1760)

(i) SOCIETY

WE are familiar with the London of William III, Anne and the first two Georges as bustling with an aristocratic society reckless and fashionable, gorgeously dressed and heavily bewigged, devoted to every kind of expensive amusement, wicked and witty: or perhaps, and with a nearer approach to the truth, as the sphere of substantial merchants connected with the East or the West Indies, dignified men who 'took tobacco' in long pipes, read big books and very small newspapers and lived in roomy brick houses in the City streets. Both sets belong to the upper layer of London life. The ladies of both classes had begun to entertain their friends with 'a dish of tea' served in an 'equipage' of silver and delicate china. When they went out, attended by servants perhaps carrying a pet dog upon a cushion, they were carried in sedan-chairs or driven in cumbrous coaches.

But we should also remember the age as that which established scientific thought in England, for it is the period of Newton, of Dr. Radcliffe and the first steps in modern Medicine, of Wren and English classical architecture, of Locke and the Common-sense philosophy, of Pope and classical poetry. The first rule of intellect and literature in the 'Augustan' epoch of Anne and her successors is clarity. This is the self-styled Age of Reason, when ideas were tested by definition, exactitude and ratiocination, when poetry became terse and architecture was modelled on straight lines. On all sides a tendency to distinguish and classify is seen.

Just as in the great sphere of Government a balanced Constitution is accompanied by the acceptance of definite political parties (a condition hitherto regarded as obviously discreditable and seditious), so also in social life are the divisions between *classes* definitely recognised. This arose partly from the increasing elaborateness of life; people had to concentrate more upon their particular professions; a soldier could no longer suddenly turn sailor (like Albemarle and Blake), nor a rich nobleman direct smuggling ventures (like the puritan Earl of Warwick), nor need the wholesale merchant himself travel to the Levant: bishops no longer held ministerial posts: ladies of fashion ceased to be prodigies of learning or distillers of medicines. In the same way, Town and Country grew apart,

and the gap widened between noble and commoner, between London and the rest of England, between rich and poor.

First of all, we must regard the last quarter of the seventeenth century and the whole of the eighteenth as the AGE OF PARTY in every sphere of life.

(1) In Religion;—no longer can the Church be termed “the nation in its religious aspect,” for during the twenty years of violence (1640–60) and the subsequent years of reaction, theological dissensions, usurping the name and place of religion, had incited persecutions which no party or sect could easily forget, and, since the Restoration, Romanism on the one hand and septicism on the other had made considerable strides both among the aristocracy and to some degree among the uninstructed and disgusted masses. The Church, the Nonconformists and the Roman-catholics were now recognised as three separate bodies : a distinction which sharpened the divisions of parties.

(2) In politics the famous *Whigs* and *Tories* are neither of them, strictly speaking, purely Whig or Tory, for each had a backing of some other sections of the nation, whether or no these had any votes to cast. The Whigs—the aristocratic and wealthy party—were supported by the dissenters and the atheists, as well as by mobs of destructive roughs, while the Tories had the equally dubious support of Jacobites and Romanists and, of course, mobs as required. To give the crowd money to drink somebody’s health was a recognised mode of propaganda : when young Whig nobles flocked to gamble and be witty at *White’s* (founded 1697) and sober Whig merchants compared notes at *The Cocoa-tree* upon French privateers waiting for the Smyrna fleet, the *mobile* resorted to drink “*Down with the Pretender*” at the taverns in government interest known as *mouhous*.

Another cause of the separation of classes was the extended scale in the estimation of wealth, fashion or culture. A special education was now provided for youths destined to definite careers in politics, the Church, literature, country estates, etc., and this kept them apart from others by a difference in tastes and manners.

Both population and wealth were increasing, and in the conditions of general liberty and security enjoyed after 1689 people felt no diffidence in enjoying and displaying their riches, or their idiosyncrasies. The impression made on a Swiss visitor to London and its neighbourhood in 1692 was of an amazing prosperity, an equally amazing liberty among all classes, a general coarseness in conduct, an absence of convention and an excessive leniency in regard to personal violence, resulting in what he considered extraordinary rudeness and even brutality, in comparison with France and Switzerland. He describes the known *bully* : a man who got his way in streets, inns and shops, by dint of using a cudgel on anybody who did not immediately yield to him. Violence of this kind had

been increasing steadily throughout the seventeenth century, but only after 1689 were tardy efforts begun in the direction of chastising robbers and bullies, efforts which were not very rapidly successful.

(3) It is during this period that we first find a suspicion of antagonism between the commercial classes and the gentlemen. This was a new idea, for the evidence we have of earlier times shows the exact opposite. From the fourteenth century to the close of the seventeenth, the gentleman's younger son had found his most promising career in commerce. As far back as the days of Edward III the French had jeered at the respect paid to commerce by English princes and lords. There was little or no difference of station, in the fifteenth century, between rich squires and rich merchants, and nothing remarkable in the bluest blood marrying into commercial families (as a Butler and a Beaufort had done with a Boleyn and a Paston). At the close of the seventeenth century the squire's younger son was still apprenticed to a merchant, the vicar's son to a retail shopkeeper; the farmer's son could get just as good an education and might become, like Latimer, an eminent bishop or, like Selden, a famous lawyer.

But from 1689 the case seems to become altered. The nobility now bore themselves as if greatly superior to the commercial or the clerical classes. They might still marry 'a fortune' derived from the City, but their condescension in doing so was made manifest. The new attitude perhaps originated in imitation of French fashionable manners under Charles II, and it was strengthened by the closer acquaintance with the Continent made by the English nobility during the eighteenth century. In any case, the fact that, for a century after 1689, the great families monopolised political power stamped them as a class above other classes, almost the equals of the Crown, too often above the restrictions of religion and morality, and only not above the law. Not that titles were necessary; the great landed families, with or without titles, controlled fashionable manners and wielded political influence, while as patrons, and being themselves highly cultured, they exercised a certain direction of poetry and art and learning which amounted to creating *Taste*. The personality of the sovereigns—Dutch, or German save for the humdrum Anne—placed the nobles foremost.

It was from 1689 that *politics* became the province peculiarly of the great families. Business men had now far less inclination than in 1640 to take up politics, while the increased power and dignity of Parliament naturally attracted the great. Those families which had taken the lead in placing William III on the throne plumed themselves highly on the achievement and considered that ever after they had a natural right to conduct the government. The wars and diplomacy of Great Britain till 1770 are of their making, foreign policy being, in their eyes, the principal concern of Parliament.

Nevertheless there was no danger of England becoming a mere aristocratic oligarchy, like Sweden or Poland. Quite outside

parliamentary politics, in the varied activities of Local Government was exhibited the strength of those other and larger classes with which the nobility was still socially connected—the *Middle Classes*.

It is a commonplace of history that the numbers and importance of the 'Middle Classes' have been for centuries a distinctive characteristic of England, and, being a commonplace, it is apt to be forgotten. The leading sections were, in the country, the smaller gentry, in the towns, the merchants, and while the *great* families were displaying their wealth and power in the grand sphere of politics or the costly sphere of fashion, the country squire was predominant at home, and upon the magistrates' bench was the equal of his magnificent neighbour. It was the squires who administered not only the law but all the organised life of the counties. The Game Laws, the Penal Code, the Settlement Act, the laws on religious worship, on apprenticeship, building of cottages, licences, meeting-houses, schools, workhouses, poor-relief, wages, etc., placed an enormous weight of unpaid work on the shoulders of the country gentlemen, who for the most part laboured honourably and up to their lights to cope with it. The parish overseers and churchwardens, the village beadle or constable and the squire's gamekeeper were the minor officials of this national rural government, the unit being by custom, as by law, the parish.

The links of common interest which bound together the great families, the squires and the yeomen (including farmers), were less those of politics than those of agriculture and field sports. Politics, therefore, never became the leading motive of the majority of intelligent men. Dignity and honour were quite as often associated with the possession and good management of land, or with a character for courage and enterprise. The novelists who, about the close of this era, best illustrate the life of the time—Miss Burney, Miss Edgeworth and Miss Austen—never show their characters concerned with politics.

Among the commercial classes a new type becomes noticeable about the middle of the century in the man who returned home with a large fortune won abroad, the retired *planter* from the West Indies, or the *nabob* from the East Indies. They were the millionaires of their time. Returning, after long years, to England they would purchase a country property and a London mansion and exhibit a profusion and an arbitrary temper popularly considered to be only "fit for a lord."

They were usually unpopular, and their ambition urged them to try to take rank among county magnates rather than to lead a 'class' of commercial men. Not that there was much inclination among the latter to form a particular 'class': merchants, bankers, manufacturers, shopkeepers and innkeepers mingled with such individuals in their own neighbourhood as resembled them in manners and means, just as they had for ages done. This was a permanent trait of English life which always contrasted strongly

with Continental custom. And it may here be added that the remarkable influx of Jewish financial experts under Charles II and again about 1694—coming frequently as Dutch agents—would not affect social relations, as they usually remained a class apart, at least till 1760. The French refugees who arrived after 1685, like the Dutch followers of William, were well-to-do and often well born, and lived and married among their equals.

The rest of the Middle Class, neither gentry nor commercial men, can hardly be defined. Their varied interests connected them with every section of the nation of which they formed so considerable a part. Clergy, doctors, lawyers, artists, authors, teachers, collectors of taxes and a host of minor government officials, mingled with the commercial men and the less wealthy landowners in country and town. Their property might or might not give them votes to cast



CARRIER'S WAGON (1690).

at a parliamentary election, but their support or neglect was the decisive factor in the observance or neglect of the laws and in causing any step to be 'popular' or 'unpopular.'

(ii) TOWN AND COUNTRY

The journals of a lady who had the enterprise, unusual then for a woman, to travel for entertainment give us a first-hand description of many parts of England between 1690 and 1710.¹

At that time the difference was striking between the civilised, thickly populated southern counties and the uncouth and impoverished north. In the counties within the natural radius of London there were main roads which, if often too dusty or muddy for comfort, were at any rate capable of being traversed by wheels as far as Southampton, Dover, Lynn, Oxford, Bristol or even Nottingham. In 1750, as in 1450, the wagoner would convey heavy packages from town to town, as well as poor travellers, including the pauper children who were to be apprenticed in manufacturing towns. But as the wheels were broad, the wagons springless, and the teams seldom able to go beyond a foot's pace, everyone who was able to do so journeyed on horseback. It was not till the latter

¹ *Through England on a Side-saddle*, the Journal of Celia Fiennes, which may be supplemented from Defoe and others (see Introduction).

part of the eighteenth century that the improvement in the roads permitted chaises and coaches to travel at a better pace.

Miss Fiennes found excellent inns in the towns of the southern, midland and eastern counties. In country places she was sure of a friendly welcome wherever a gentleman's mansion rose, for English hospitality was lavish, and squires, parsons and farmers delighted to entertain strangers of their own degree and learn the news and the fashions. She herself was a member of the ancient family of Lord Saye, which, puritan in the civil war, had emerged more wealthy than before.

But there were some purely agricultural districts (parts of Hampshire, Oxfordshire, Derbyshire, Cheshire) where she sometimes found villages with neither squire nor inn, and where all the inhabitants were so poor that no one could provide, for any money, stabling for a horse or a meal for a man. Here the labouring folk, always toiling for a bare subsistence, had neither time nor strength to go a mile or two from home and could not even tell the way to the nearest town. When, however, several large estates were in the possession of one owner, he had sometimes established in the disused manor-house some old servant and allowed him to make what he could by providing for strangers. This was the origin of many old inns, of which the most celebrated is 'The Castle' at Marlborough. In the wilder parts of England it was easy to lose the way on the open, unfenced tracks, hard to discover the unmarked ford or avoid the broken bridge or even, in parts of Derbyshire and Yorkshire, the open shafts of old mines.

Nevertheless, riding was still the usual mode of travelling over three-quarters of England, whether on the unmetalled moorland tracks of Derbyshire and Yorkshire, the green slopes of Gloucester and Oxford-shires, or the narrow stone causeys, such as crossed the marshy grounds by Oxford, Stratford or York and stretched for miles in Somerset, or in the deep hollow lanes which still, for all its prosperity, served Lancashire.

Paved or unpaved, these narrow tracks were often blocked by long strings of pack-horses. Even the minor weaving centre of Kendal was reckoned to send between two and three hundred pack-horses to and fro, and as far as to London and Glasgow, for only the road to Lancaster permitted of wagons. From Manchester many hundreds a week went regularly to the ports, including Bristol and London. Between Bristol and Taunton the traveller could hardly get on for the strings of horses, laden with broad panniers of coals from Bristol or Radstock, or conveying back cloth in exchange from the broad-cloth weavers of Somerset and Devon. It seems that all the available wood had here been consumed long since.

The south-west was probably the most flourishing part of England at the beginning of the eighteenth century. It had had little occasion to rebuild its towns, for neither they nor the churches had

been greatly desolated by Puritans or soldiers. Its pleasures and manners were still of the old hearty fashion, while some, at least, of its enterprising industrial men were building excellent houses, which prove that the native artistic talent was still alive.

The other famous weaving district, Norfolk and Suffolk (which produced *worsted*, not *cloth* goods), was also still active and prosperous. Norwich was, as ever, the capital of that district and was (in 1700) growing larger. Its olden puritan sympathies made it a great centre of Nonconformity, marking another difference between the eastern counties and the south-west, which, as formerly, claved rather to the Church.

In the north, that extraordinary increase of the weaving industry in Yorkshire, which in the end was to blight the prosperity of both Norfolk and Somerset, had not begun in 1700, but its normal development from 1689–1750 was making the worsted towns—Leeds, Wakefield, Halifax and Bradford—grow in size and prosperity, and the wool market of York had been ruined by them so that the older city became poverty-stricken. Leeds may be cited as illustrating both the decline in public spirit and the increase of commercial energy. The seventeenth century had endowed the town with a public school housed in a fine building and possessed of a library, as well as with almshouses for relief of deserving people. By the end of that century the almshouses had decayed, but were refounded, after which they were annexed as a part of the workhouse system, so as to relieve the rates. But during the eighteenth century (later than 1725) the library vanished and the splendid coloured windows of the school were handed to a local glazier as a ‘perquisite.’ It may be fairly assumed that some magnate with a taste for art purchased the window-glass of the glazier, someone else had been gratified with the books, while the endowment of land for a hospital had been long since absorbed by the family of the former trustee, who left the hospital to fall down. On the other hand, in 1750 the town was paving its streets, the site of the ruinous hospital had been taken for a White Cloth Hall (or Cloth Exchange), which, before 1760, was superseded by a larger building, while the quondam hall (or hospital) had turned into an alehouse and shops. Perquisites form a feature of the time.

All the newly-grown Yorkshire towns, as well as the older towns of Hull, Doncaster, Scarborough and Newcastle-on-Tyne, were characterised by much nonconformist energy. The old northern parishes were usually vast, and could not make provision for the spiritual needs of a large new population, especially where (as at Macclesfield and Birmingham) towns were growing not actually at an old centre of church and village life, but on the edges of old parishes, far from church and vicar. Their partial exclusion from offices and political posts had since 1660 induced the Dissenters to devote their main attention to commerce and the particular social circle in which they lived, and many of them were masters of large

and wealthy businesses. In the north and east of Yorkshire, the Quakers appear to have become the principal capitalists. In Scarborough they owned nearly all the lodging houses.

Lancashire, which had suffered less seriously than the West Riding during the Civil War, was in 1700 thriving even more rapidly. Wigan (says Miss Fiennes) was "a pretty market town of stone and brick . . . here it is that the fine [cannel] coals are in perfection—burn as bright as a candle—set the coals together with some fire and it shall give a snap and burn up bright." This was a surprise to visitors from London, who only knew 'sea-coal,' the dull-burning coal, perhaps unscreened, that caked and was so much less pleasant than wood fuel that the fashionable and wealthy used it reluctantly till George III shocked the gossips by ordering coal to be burned in the royal household, when the best quality found its way to London.

The export of this bright-burning *cannel* coal was one factor in the growth of Liverpool, which was now also developing a busy American trade, largely in slaves, but also in textile goods from Manchester and the other weaving and dyeing towns, Rochdale, Blackburn, Bury, to and from Northern Ireland. In Anne's time, Liverpool is described as "a very rich trading town mostly new built of brick and stone after the London fashion." It consisted of twenty-four streets, in which appeared "abundance of persons very well dressed and very good fashion—it's London in miniature as much as ever I saw anything." Manchester, not yet rebuilt out of knowledge, was remarkable for its substantial appearance, the newer houses not very lofty but built of brick or stone, the older ones of timber-work, with its very large church standing so high that walking round the churchyard you saw the whole town. Its Bluecoat school [Chetham's] was famous, and the boys had the remarkable advantage of a playground and a garden.

Fortunate at this period were the districts which had a coal supply, for the woods of England had been heavily laid waste in the seventeenth century. Derbyshire, in Anne's time, was a bleak waste, every tree and bush having been seized for fuel. Chatsworth and Buxton stood among bare crags, for the Cavendishes had not yet planted their new woods. It was even startling, on reaching Uttoxeter, to find the Staffordshire woodland beginning quite suddenly. The ancient Arden, or forest of that county, was still strikingly distinct from the cultivated part and provided the cheap fuel which fed the industries of Birmingham and its neighbourhood.

Miss Fiennes was pleased to find many of the older towns rebuilt in the *new style* which had been adopted in London after the Great Fire, that is, in red brick which "looks like sealing-wax," or in stone if brick could not be readily obtained, while the roofs were slated. The old timber and plaster style with tiled roofs was considered out of date, while thatch was despised as fit only for the poor. The new houses were far safer from fire and they were now made commodious within, lined with wainscot and fitted with windows

made to open by sashes. They were placed, too, so as to make the streets as straight and uniform as possible.

Many persons of the upper class who were not very rich were now deserting their country homes to live in towns, so that the county town was a small metropolis and had its clubs, playhouses, theatres, newspapers, concerts and other entertainments like London. "Abundance of people of Quality lives in Shrewsbury, more than in any town except Nottingham," notes Miss Fiennes. Its schools were famous and its old-fashioned houses were so stately that there was no need of rebuilding. Nottingham was so fine and lively a town as to seem 'almost like London,' and it disputed with Chesterfield the claim to make the best ale in the kingdom. All the county was "an exceeding pleasant shire, full of gentry," in contrast to the barer sheep-breeding regions of Leicestershire where, however, the squires were busy replanting. Northampton had also accomplished a great rebuilding in straight streets, 'like London,' whereas Leicester still remained old-fashioned, though very populous.

No one had as yet suggested any opposition between the interests of town and country. In fact the prosperity so remarkable in the middle of the century in Lancashire, the West Riding and Leicestershire depended on the combination of rural and city life, as had always been the case in Norfolk or Somerset. In all of these counties numbers of artisans were scattered among the farms which surrounded the towns, and on market-days they came in troops to bring their finished work to the dealers. The towns were not yet big enough or crowded enough to be unhealthy and disagreeable; they still contained plenty of gardens.

The cotton weavers of South Lancashire, the worsted weavers of the West Riding and East Anglia, the broad-cloth weavers of Somerset, and the frame-knitters (hosiers) of Leicestershire, were as much at home in country as in town; their small holdings kept them well fed, and when the great improvement in agriculture began they benefited as much as anyone.

The food of the working people varied according to the agriculture which suited their climate and soil. The south-eastern counties were growing wheat, as they had done for over a thousand years, and a preference for wheaten bread was spreading to counties where the climate had always better suited oats, or barley, or rye. But porridge was not yet ousted by bread, nor would be so long as the abundance of pasture made milk plentiful.

In Lancashire and Westmoreland oats, whether in the form of *clapbread* or of porridge, formed, with milk, the real staple of food, though visitors might be offered bread of wheat flour, or more likely of mixed wheat and rye; the potato, too, had by 1700 become in Lancashire an almost universal crop, and as that county had long practised enclosure by hedges or walls, the cultivation of the tubers, as well as of oats, barley, peas and beans, could be carefully attended



COUNTRY INN YARD. (HOGARTH)

facing p. 50.

to. The planting of hedges was no doubt particularly valuable in that windy and rain-swept region, for Miss Fiennes notices as very remarkable and agreeable the fact that the road from Rochdale to Manchester was entirely bordered by thick hedges.

(iii) RELIGION, MORALS AND EDUCATION

It must be remembered that throughout the struggles of the seventeenth century no idea of any separation of religion—the national Church—from the national government had been contemplated, except by the scanty congregations of ‘Independents,’ the aim of the Puritans being to modify the Church as a whole into accordance with their own views.

It was Charles II who devised the plan of permitting definite congregations to *dis-sent* from the otherwise national Church. This new principle, that particular bodies of worshippers could be disconnected from the general unity, had to win its way gradually. Charles II was compelled by Parliament to withdraw his *Declaration of Indulgence* as if it had been beyond his powers to issue, nevertheless the *Dissenters* did maintain their separate places of worship, which came under the designation of *chapels*, as being places for worship, but without a parish (or cure of souls), and not under the authority of the rector or bishop¹. The Toleration Act legalised their chapels if registered by the episcopal registrar or the Justices at Quarter Sessions.

Under Charles II the fear of Romanism had provided a common ground on which many orthodox clergy and nonconforming ministers could meet, but gradually the renewed strength of the Church, with her bishops restored and her laity welcoming the return of their Common Prayer and Church Sacraments, produced a further reaction against dissent, especially in the two universities and among the young clergy who there were trained.

Whether the parson of a country parish was of a type able and anxious to improve the moral standard of his flock must depend on several circumstances, his own character and position in the first place. He was certain to be sufficient in education, for he must hold a degree from Oxford or Cambridge. The good man who was “passing rich with forty pounds a year” suggests a young poet’s ideal. On the other hand, the rector of gentle birth and good means wanted to live like other gentlemen of his acquaintance. He built a fine house with a fashionable garden and kept good horses.

¹ The mediæval *free chapel* was a place of worship without a cure of souls attached to it, practically a private church for a manor lord and his dependents, outside the control of the incumbent of the parish; but for marriage or burial resort must be had to the parish church. The modern chapel-of-ease, within a parish and subject to the rector, is an adaptation of it. A *royal free chapel* was exempt from episcopal authority (Windsor, Westminster Abbey, the Savoy Chapel).

The family of the excellent *Vicar of Wakefield* considered it impossible to go to church except on horseback. The letters of one rich incumbent who seems to have been a good specimen of his class¹ show him kindly and honourable among his connections, an admirable magistrate, a moderate politician. But he resented even the gentlest inquiry from his diocesan as to the spiritual provision made for his parishioners. He was, as he intimated, among the more advanced of his brethren in celebrating the Holy Communion once a month, four times a year being the more usual standard. He plumed himself on having a respectful congregation, and told the bishop that it was entirely beneath his dignity to know anything about the parish charities.

Where the resident clergy were of humbler rank they were sometimes devoted pastors, sometimes as obsequious to the squire as their predecessors of the fifteenth century. It was of great importance to them to win the goodwill of the patron, who might be able to give a nomination for a son at a grammar school, or as a midshipman, or to recommend the curate to a patron of better livings.

Throughout the whole century contemporary writers, from John Evelyn to Jane Austen and Mary Mitford, give many a portrait of these and other types of the country clergyman. The changes which inevitably set in among them were not such as altered their position among the laity.

The record of the famous clerical family of Wesley shows how the changes in religious thought and feeling were the natural outcome of the experiences and judgment of thoughtful men.

Samuel Wesley, father of the famous John and Charles, was brought up as a Puritan: his father and grandfather—refusing to accept Episcopacy and the Prayer Book—were ejected from their livings in 1662, the year of his birth. But after a schooling in nonconformist academies, Samuel was sent to Oxford, and there became a disciple of Tillotson and a convinced adherent of the Church of England. He was ordained in 1688, resigned his first rectory rather than countenance the bad morals of the great man of the place, and was then given the Crown living of Epworth in the Isle of Axholme (1695). In that savage region, cut off from civilisation by the marshes of Trent and Don, the young rector found himself the single-handed representative of law and order. There were no squires and the well-to-do farmers were all Dissenters and Whigs, who resented the presence of an ordained clergyman as much as the payment of tithes to him.

But ecclesiastical authority was by no means as yet in abeyance. There were legal punishments for deliberate absence from church or non-payment of tithes. For moral offences the incumbent could exact public confession and penance and inflict public disgrace. In Axholme, even if tithes were withheld, the rector could get a living for his family out of the large glebe-lands. But certain of

¹ In *The Betts of Wortham*, cf. also *The Houlton Family*, II, chap. V.

the farmers, accustomed to a free indulgence in slander, bullying, robbery and assault, felt the uncompromising rebukes of the parson insulting and incited mobs to terrorise him. His dog was maimed, his locks broken, his children scared, his barn and house set on fire; finally, he was arrested for a small debt, put in prison, and reached home to find it burnt for the second time. The whole of his property was destroyed, though his wife and children had been saved and sheltered by some of the more friendly parishioners.

Samuel Wesley was by conviction what was termed a 'high' churchman; he laid stress on sacramental teaching and the sacredness of Ordination; and he was a 'Tory' in so far as he believed all authority to be derived from God, not merely conferred by a popular decision. Yet he regarded the Revolution of 1688 with thankfulness and loyalty, as having preserved the Church and liberty. So little of a politician was he that, having two votes to cast at an election, he intended to give one for a Whig and one for a Tory, that he might not influence other voters, till he discovered that the Whig was abusing the Church and crying up Dissent, which left him no choice.

Mrs. Wesley was as remarkable as her husband for courage and zeal. She, however, held that the deposition of James II was wrong and that the Nonjurors acted rightly, but she would not take any steps towards Jacobitism, from submission to her husband. Nevertheless she distressed him seriously, on one of his absences from home, by adding to Family Prayers the reading of a sermon and admitting a number of the neighbours. This seemed to him, but not to her, to resemble a conventicle.

Local persecution having reduced the Wesleys to dire poverty, the Tory leaders were approached for some assistance: Bolingbroke and Harley recommended Wesley strongly to each other, and to the impecunious Swift. Repeated petitions at last induced one great nobleman to bestow ten pounds, but only the parson's diocesan, Archbishop Sharp, gave any substantial help.

The bishops seem invariably to have done their best to help their clergy, whether in temporal or spiritual difficulties, but the nobility and the politicians habitually treated them with the contempt which had been fashionable among puritan magnates throughout the century.

How little influence the Crown could now exert may be gathered from the fact that this period of neglect of the Church coincides with the reign of Anne, one of the few sovereigns earnestly interested in the Church. One of her first acts was to relinquish the income derived by the sovereign personally from the clerical payments known as 'first-fruits and tenths.' They represented the tax or fine which was levied by the papacy in the later Middle Ages and transferred to Henry VIII (*annates*). Anne restored the fund to the Church to form a provision for augmenting very poor livings.

To enable her to do this lawfully an Act of Parliament was passed

(1703), altered somewhat in later times by additional Acts. But the Queen's self-denying example does not seem to have had many imitators among such of her subjects as were patrons and lay rectors.

In the towns, where books were not yet too plentiful for their readers, and men could easily find associates in thought and speech, the influence of religion depended less entirely upon the clergy. The custom of the outgoing century still persisted of holding regular *meetings*, usually on Sunday afternoon, for prayer and addresses among the laity. Miss Fiennes, on her travels, always attended church in the morning and inquired where the afternoon meeting would be held. She expected to find it composed of the cultivated upper class, and in the towns of the eastern and southern counties this was the case. The habit was a relic of Puritanism but, rather oddly, seems to have been gradually extinguished by the legal effects of the Toleration Act itself. 'Assemblies' outside the Church were legal if registered, but they were registered as *nonconformist*. In 1700 the frequenters of meetings by no means all intended to become Nonconformists. The afternoon meeting, therefore, often disappeared from its lay assembly room, sometimes to reappear in a rather different guise, either in chapel or in church.

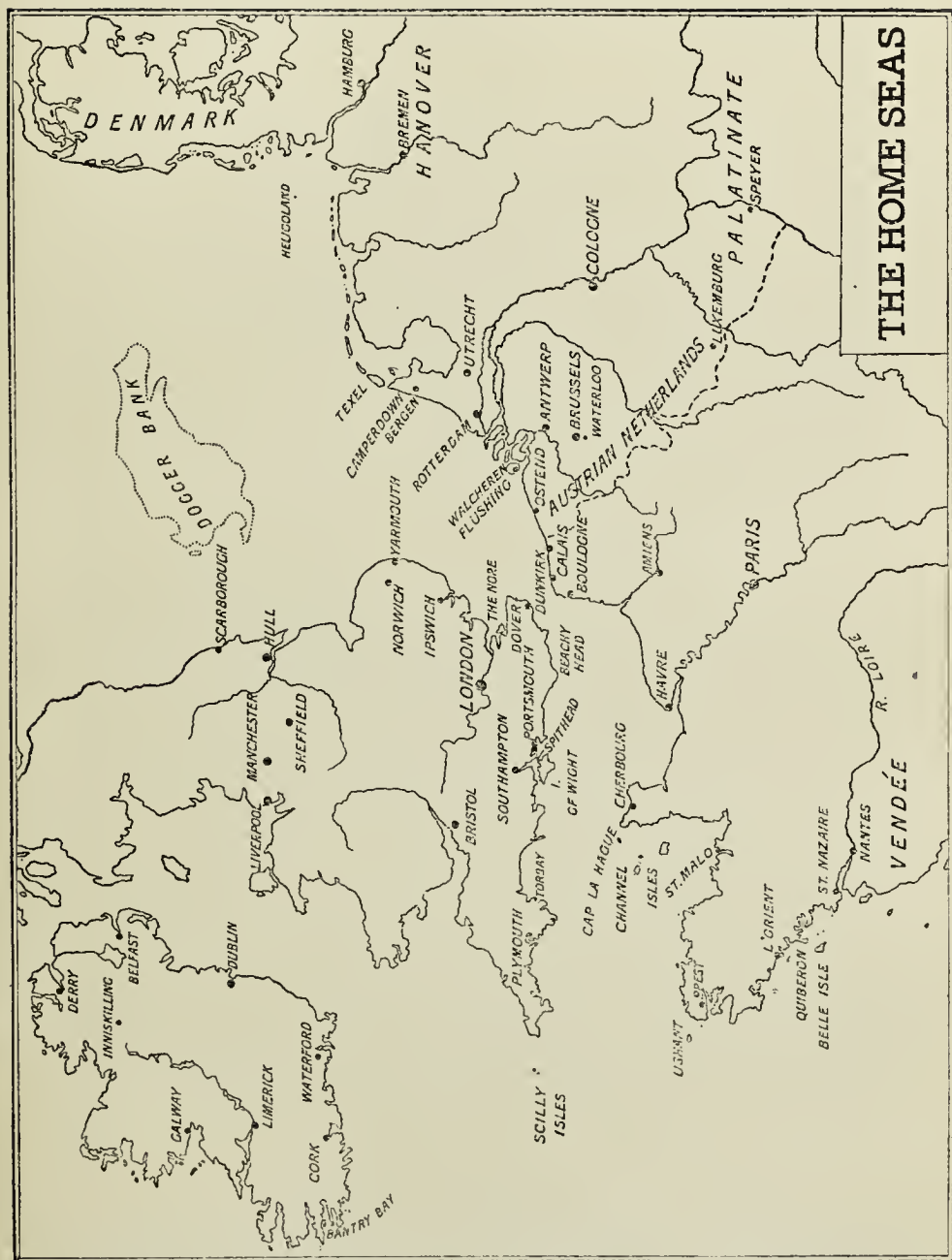
Whether as a result of the intellectual stimulus of the Revolution or not, a religious movement was gathering strength (about 1689) quite outside the scope of political changes. It had, in truth, begun with the Restoration and was largely due to the efforts of spiritually-minded churchmen, struggling against the pagan character of society.

In London, the two universities and other towns, small and informal *Societies* were frequently formed among young men for combined religious worship and study. They were connected with some particular church where the members would assemble to join in the Church prayers and the Eucharist, and often a Society would subscribe a small salary for a Lecturer to give addresses to them.

This purely voluntary movement gave vitality to what was thenceforth to be a foremost characteristic of the Church of England—the maintenance of the corporate aspect of Christianity, the ideal of national fellowship and a common responsibility for the spiritual life of the community and nation.

Allied with these societies is one of the most fruitful movements of that age, the work, not of authorities, but of the life-long endeavours of an energetic Shropshire clergyman, Thomas Bray, a man imbued with the missionary spirit and one of the few who heard with an active sympathy the appeals from the American colonists for clergy and teachers.

The hindrance in the eighteenth century to a response on the part of the bishops to these continual appeals was that it was not legal to consecrate a bishop except by command of the Crown, and there was no machinery whereby the Crown could authorise the creation



of a Bishop except to one of the recognised English sees. To create a new see, still more a bishop without a see, was apparently beyond the scope of the Crown. Whig ministers, pagan in temper, regarded bishops as potential Jacobite leaders, certain to vote as Tories, and flouted them, to court Dissenters. Again and again money was provided (by Archbishop Tenison, Bishop Berkeley and others), but ministers would not ask Parliament to pass the necessary Act. Dr. Bray quickly discovered that friendly speeches in the House of Commons and even a royal grant by William III meant nothing in practice, but he turned undismayed to a few earnest friends for help. By joining together in a Society they aimed at providing that security for a continued effort which they could not obtain from the State. This was the origin of the *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* (1699). Bray's original aim was to preserve Christianity in the colonies. But he perceived that not only there, but at home, amid polemics and party strife, Christianity was actually dying out among the masses, from sheer ignorance. Bishop Burnet had already discovered the same thing, and had tried in his own diocese to induce his clergy to evangelise their flocks. But he had not Bray's persistence and ceased his efforts after a few years before the stolid inertia of his country clergymen. Bray's Society aimed at providing schools and teachers, clergy and books, both for English people and the colonists. Thoughtful and patriotic men hailed it with joy. Admiral Benbow asked for its books for his sailors, and Marlborough for his soldiers, and amongst its earliest members were bishops and Nonjurors alike, and such eminent laymen as John Evelyn, and William III's poet-doctor, Blackmore. That branch which devoted itself to supporting missionary clergy soon became a separate society (*Society for the Propagation of the Gospel*), and through its efforts clergy went to the West Indies and several of the North American colonies.

These truly religious societies were maintained by the few. There were other more secular societies in many places—" *For the reformation of manners* "—which endeavoured to cope with the more glaring forms of misconduct by legal methods. Magistrates both in London and the country often exerted themselves to form such societies, which aimed at a sort of policing of the streets, arrest of violent, profane, drunken characters, prompt trials and severe sentences. Respect for the law certainly increased, and appears to have diminished the outbreaks of violence, though maybe certain other crimes were only driven into concealment.

As, however, in the meantime dissoluteness was increasing with impunity among the fashionable classes, the severity of the punishments inflicted on the poor and ignorant amounted to a crying injustice. Foreign visitors, who before 1700 express surprise at the laxity of the English law, after 1714 censure it for cruelty.

The lowest stratum of the town population, especially in London, which was growing rapidly, was appallingly brutal. This was no

doubt mainly due to a wholesale increase in drunkenness, which arose partly from the unforeseen effects of certain legislation.

In consequence of the increased price of beer, caused by the excise on malt, people took to drinking spirits, distilleries being actually encouraged by a lower excise duty, because they caused grain to be grown. Spirits could more easily be made in secret than ale. A vigorous smuggling trade arose also, to bring gin from Holland, and brandy from France. In England, gin, in Scotland, whisky, were becoming (1720-40) the favourite drink of the poorer classes in towns in place of the less harmful beer. A notorious instance is that of a certain London tavern which put up a notice—"Drunk for a 1*d.*, dead-drunk for 2*d.*, straw for nothing." Crime and disease at last became so rampant in the streets of the capital that an eminent and philanthropic lawyer, Jekyll, whom Pope laughed at, carried an Act (1736) laying the prohibitive tax of 20*s.* a gallon on retailed spirits. The result was that the retailers ignored the Act and the mob lynched the officers of the law if they tried to make arrests. Carteret, next, went to the opposite extreme and tried a nominal tax of 6*d.* or even a penny, with hideous results. One consequence was that the population of London declined so rapidly that Parliament was alarmed, while the extraordinary pictures of the artist-reformer, Hogarth, forced aristocratic society to face the facts. Pelham at last provided a law (1743) which could be really enforced, and this made the beginning of an improvement.

Among the well-to-do, also, drunkenness had been accidentally stimulated by policy. When Portugal joined the Grand Alliance the Whigs offered her the strong inducement of a commercial treaty (1703) known, from the ambassador who arranged it, as the Methuen Treaty. Portuguese wines were admitted to the British Isles at a very low duty, while French and Spanish wines were rated heavily. In consequence the polite world took to port instead of claret, but instead of mixing the potent juice with water, as the Portuguese did, they drank it neat and in bumpers, like the milder wine to which they were accustomed. Hard drinking became fashionable and was encouraged by the custom of *toasts*; anyone who declined to drink bumpers was treated as a milksop and a hypocrite. This habit lasted longer than the war, or the century. Doctors often prescribed port by the pint as good for delicate persons (*e.g.* William Pitt), and gout became a fashionable disease, almost a certificate of good birth.

EDUCATION

In the education of the middle classes a considerable improvement took place between 1672 and 1711, from the establishment of *Academies*, or large private schools, in country towns and in the suburbs of London, and especially among Nonconformists. They were mostly boarding-schools and observed a much better curriculum and discipline than did the old public schools, which, like the

universities, seem to have deteriorated gravely and become so inefficient and so brutal that careful parents were afraid to send their boys to them. Eton and Westminster remained the two leading, and rival, public schools where the sons of the aristocracy were fitted for a political life, Westminster having benefited by the traditions created by the famous Busby (1640-95). The two universities, having a monopoly of higher teaching, now practically formed a kind of close interest with the clergy, and from 1689 were treated almost as a kind of political nursery for them, Whig or Tory according to the ascendant party. The consequence was a long intellectual lethargy, when teaching and examinations were reduced to bare formalities, neither instructing nor testing at all, unless the student was confided to a special tutor of unusual energy.

In the simplest grade of education, however, the age of William and Anne saw a temporary improvement. The clergy and the well-to-do laity made considerable efforts to provide cheap elementary schools in many small towns and villages. Often they were free, and then were called Charity schools. Such schools were usually taught by women, and then were known as Dame schools. The licences which schoolmasters must obtain were not necessary for women, and thus small, inexpensive elementary schools were possible. This excellent movement was the result of a general recognition that bad morals and lawlessness resulted largely from the gross ignorance into which the peasantry and the poor generally had been allowed—or compelled—to sink, and that it was useless to appeal to religious principle or to execute severe laws among people unable to understand or learn.

Among the superior classes the high level reached by many men of science and philosophy was anything but typical of the general standard. Those pioneers in medicine who proclaimed scientific doctrine seldom roused any professional feelings but spite (*e.g.* Dr. Radcliffe under Anne). The well-known weekly papers of Steele and Addison had their origin in a desire to show the well-to-do middle class, especially the women, that entertainment need not be vicious nor useful information dull. The very clarity of Addison's style and the simplicity of his topics indicates that the families which he aimed at reaching—those of the town and country middle class generally—were less well informed and intelligent than people of similar standing in the mid-seventeenth century. Female education in particular now reached but a paltry standard. One highly-praised school for young gentlewomen is described as teaching "work, behaviour and music." The satirical Defoe included an "Academy for Women" among the Utopian projects he suggested to the public (*Essay upon Projects*, 1697). To play the harpsichord became the fashion, early in the eighteenth century, a result of the fondness for music of the new royal family, but elaborate fancy-work took the place of the spinning, distilling, medicine, farmery

and sound reading of the previous century. Writing, on the other hand, was regarded as an elaborate art with several styles, requiring a master and a lengthy course of instruction.

Hardly had the Church begun to resume her ancient task of teaching the peasantry when party suspicion dealt a severe blow at those better-class schools known as *Academies*. The Tories of Anne's reign, after being twice defeated in the House of Lords (1702, 1703), contrived in 1711 to carry the *Occasional Conformity Act*, which inflicted heavy penalties on Nonconformists who should qualify for local offices by once receiving the sacrament in their parish churches. They therefore could hold no posts whatever and they were also forbidden to keep schools in the counties where they had so qualified. This extinguished a great many of the Nonconformist Academies, but a few removed elsewhere. In 1714, therefore, an additional prohibition was invented. No man might teach at all unless he was licensed by a bishop (the *Schism Act*), and hereupon the Academies of the Dissenters were finally dissolved, while the Church schools themselves were so hampered by the difficulty with which degrees and licences to teach were to be obtained (almost as if to prevent people from teaching) that the regulations nearly killed out the teachers, except in the village Dame schools.

The *Occasional Conformity Act* and the *Schism Act* were soon repealed (1719), but the injury to education had been done and the licences still remained necessary for the regular Church schools, which were thus somewhat handicapped, on the others being freed. As the eighteenth century went on, the increasing materialism and callousness of politicians in office discouraged voluntary effort, and by the middle of the century national education, including most of the public schools, sank probably to its lowest depth since the Norman period. It is therefore not surprising that parents shunned the public schools and relied upon private teaching. Even at Westminster and Eton a private tutor was required if a boy was to learn anything.

Whether for a political or a commercial career, a lad had to work fairly hard, and from about 1660 to 1770 he did so. If he aimed at making a mark in politics and society he must, first, acquire a real acquaintance with the classical languages and literature; it was not enough to construe a few passages in little books made easy by notes—such text-books did not yet exist—he must read fluently and retain in his memory whole volumes. Members of Parliament and young men of fashion were expected to recognise quotations, and when fashionable poets (Pope, though much the greatest, was not the only one) published translations of Horace and Homer, adapted to their own times, the cultivated world found half its pleasure in observing the aptness of the parallels. Of modern languages, French was a necessity to anyone who aspired to politeness, and Italian and Spanish were very desirable. With similar

thoroughness was a military man expected to study 'the mathematics,' which included the Art of Fortification; a discussion on the technique of a recent siege was quite probable in conversation. The Fine Arts formed another branch of the education of the gentleman. A tour on the Continent in the company of some better-instructed young man as tutor probably conveyed this knowledge, as well as the habit of conversing easily in French and Italian, and such tours might last two or three years, and encouraged a thoroughly cosmopolitan habit of mind: the Englishman of fortune felt more at home among Italian or French noblemen than among his tenant farmers or the neighbouring squires.

In the world of commerce, the lad who was to enter a good house of business must still become an apprentice. A fee would be paid for him on entry, which might amount to two or three hundred pounds. The merchant to whom he was indentured would see that he learnt arithmetic and read useful books, and that he gradually went through every practical step in the business, from taking down the shutters to negotiating purchases and loans in London markets. He, too, had to learn to speak and write several foreign tongues, for he might be sent to Amsterdam or Hamburg, to Oporto and Lisbon, to Bordeaux, Paris, Genoa, and even to the Levant or the West Indies.

A signal achievement of the Whig government, which came about almost by accident, was the freeing of the printing-press from the censorship which had hitherto restrained it. The Licensing Act, under which supervision was exercised, expired in 1695. The Commons would not renew it as it stood, and for various reasons a new Act was deferred for so long that a free press became the accepted rule. The result was a vast increase in popular literature of all kinds, including the pamphlets whereby both political parties endeavoured to persuade the public. With pamphlets came better newspapers, and when Defoe combined the political tract with news and gossip, and wrote comments much like the present leading articles, the modern newspaper had arrived.

Defoe is the principal popular writer of the Revolution age (1689-1702). His tales, *e.g.* the *Journal of the Great Plague* and the immortal *Robinson Crusoe*, prove that the town middle class could take interest in other literature than political pamphlets and sermons, and the excellence of some of the books provided for it must have had a considerable share in the improvement which gradually took place. To this same prosperous, but not highly cultivated, town population Steele and Addison addressed their *Spectators*; nor would they or their country neighbours have much difficulty in following the reasoning of the instructive Locke, the philosopher of Common-Sense and the Revolution, the satire of Swift, the history of the sensible Burnet, or the sermons of the popular Revolution divines, Tillotson and Sherlock.

If the new style of government imported politics into literature, it

at least encouraged good and interesting literature. The lighter side of polemics was exhibited in satire, which retained its attraction for the London public, a public still small and compact enough to be acquainted with the persons concerned and to recognise the hits. Satire, at all events, marks a great advance in tolerance on the methods of the seventeenth century, with its plots and executions, its Star Chamber trials and Acts of Attainder.

VII

WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION AND THE PARTY STRUGGLE AT HOME

ANNE (MARCH 1702—AUGUST 1714)

So far as foreign policy went, William's death made little difference. The experienced Godolphin became Lord Treasurer and leading minister, and the Earl of Marlborough was universally allowed to be the one man fit to conduct the war. His offices, Captain-General and Master of the Ordnance, gave him full control of military matters, and his influence with the Queen and his friendship with Godolphin gave him a decisive voice on any other matter which interested him.

Abroad, William III had carefully prepared the United Provinces and the Emperor to accept Marlborough as the representative of England and the principal commander of the Allies.

The English now supported the war with more enthusiasm than in William's time. The arbitrary designs of the French King were clear to them, and general alarm was felt lest he should really obtain control over Spain and her vast colonial empire, not to mention Flanders. Not that the English political leaders and the London merchants on whose support they reckoned cared anything about the destinies of the Spanish Empire as such. What they and the entire nation were concerned about, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was rivalry in commerce, especially at sea. Maritime pride and commercial jealousy had succeeded to the semi-religious passion of the sixteenth century and had lain at the root of the Dutch wars under the Commonwealth and Charles II.

Both England and Holland had long conducted a vigorous commerce with Spain and her colonies, and Spanish America and the Spanish West Indies were supplied with the necessities of civilised life chiefly by Dutch and English merchant ships. The Spanish overseas dominions were rich in precious metals alone and offered an almost insatiable market for manufactured goods and slaves, paid for in gold and silver. It is true that Spain forbade her colonies to trade with outsiders, but her navy and officers were powerless to enforce the rule. If, however, the French navy were to undertake the policing of Spanish-American waters, things would be very different. All English commerce there was technically smuggling, and a few powerful French ships could destroy it. Probably, too, French

organisers would restore the naval strength of Spain, and then a double navy would command the Atlantic and cut off England's own sugar and tobacco growing colonies from British and European markets. Imagination might forecast a military movement, starting from French Canada and Spanish Florida, which would actually sweep away our fishing settlements beside the Bay of the St. Lawrence and let loose the native Indians to overwhelm the long but thin fringe of Atlantic colonies in wholesale massacre. As for a French conquest of the Flemish coast, that must be prevented at all costs.

Marlborough was not only a great campaigning general, but a strategist capable of planning the European war as a whole. He was, further, a diplomatist so tactful and sweet-tempered as to be able to keep the Grand Alliance together harmoniously. Even the nervous Dutch government was persuaded into permitting its troops to risk fighting. The Dutch view seldom extended beyond Dutch frontiers, and unless a great army was entrenched there they expected an immediate French invasion. In order, therefore, to prevent Marlborough from fighting the enemy too often or pursuing him too far, they attached to their troops a committee, whose consent the General was obliged to obtain before issuing orders. It was what the Scotch had done so disastrously in Cromwell's time. Marlborough, however, was brilliantly seconded by the Imperial General, Prince Eugene of Savoy; their relations with each other exhibited the ideal chivalry of brothers-in-arms, confident in each other and devoid of jealousy.

In the campaign of 1702 Marlborough drove from Flanders all the French armies between the Meuse and the Rhine, for which fine achievement the Queen made him a duke, but he was prevented from freeing Antwerp and Ostend, next year, by the disobedience of a Dutch General and the veto of the Dutch committee, so that the French continued to threaten the English coasts and commerce. But Louis XIV, who persisted in directing his Generals himself, now ordered them to make a dramatic stroke at Vienna (1704). Bavaria being allied with France, his troops seemed to have a clear approach so long as the Dutch tied up Marlborough.

But Marlborough arranged with Prince Eugene the startling campaign of Blenheim, and by this remarkable march into the heart of Bavaria, they drew the war to a focus and cleared at once both Dutch and Austrian frontiers of the enemy. Marlborough marched his entire army to the Moselle and then informed the Dutch commissioners that he should lead the English on in any case; they dared not remain behind alone, and Marlborough, sweeping across the Rhine and into the Danube valley, intercepted Marshal Tallard, at Donauwörth, near Ulm, on his way to attack Vienna. Eugene, with the Imperial forces, joined Marlborough as arranged, and an overwhelming victory was won.

The primary importance of the battle of Blenheim (or Donau-

wörth) was, first, that the powerful State of Bavaria (always the ally of France in wars between the Emperors and the French kings) was too severely stricken to be able to attack Austria at home or to hamper Eugene's armies in Italy by blocking the Alpine passes behind him. Secondly, that the annihilating character of the defeat inflicted on the French broke the prestige of Louis XIV and proportionally raised that of Marlborough. The Dutch, German, Portuguese and Savoyard members of the Grand Alliance were confirmed in their resolution and the English were roused to something like enthusiasm. Queen Anne (with parliamentary consent) bestowed upon Marlborough one of the few remaining royal domains, Henry II's famous park of Woodstock, and Parliament promised funds to erect a palace there, named *Blenheim*. In the same year Marlborough's policy of securing naval control over the *Mediterranean* came to fruition, though not altogether on his plan.

The point was that so long as an English fleet was stationed in the western Mediterranean its menace was decisive. The French fleet could not issue from Toulon without fighting; the pro-Ally Catalonians and Barcelonese were highly encouraged; the pro-French rulers in Italy were afraid and dared not hinder Allied (Austrian) troops marching to Naples. Naples itself was commanded from the sea, while the Duke of Savoy, who held the important Alpine passes, was ready to be our ally only so long as our fleet kept the French troops busy protecting their own sea frontier. Besides all these political advantages, the fleet secured the safe passage of English and Dutch merchant fleets from the Levant to the Straits.

Working out William's idea, Marlborough recognised that the first step must be to secure a permanent base and he wanted again to have Cadiz, that ideally-placed harbour from which a fleet could issue forth either into the Atlantic and the Channel or into the Mediterranean. Rooke, William's favourite naval adviser, now ranked first among our admirals. He had become by this time an elderly, self-important autocrat of the type of Russell. In politics he was a Tory, and the factious spirits of his party tried to set him up as a sort of opposition hero to Russell, Marlborough or any other Whig commander.

He was sent out, in 1702, to seize Cadiz (like Drake, Essex, or Buckingham), but although he was amply provided with everything he could think of demanding, including troops (amongst which the *Royal Marines* made their first and glorious appearance), Rooke was unable to grasp the full meaning of his orders, and found excuses for doing nothing at Cadiz. He was more fortunate at Vigo, however, impelled by the resolution of his colleague the Dutch admiral and his own dashing vice-admirals, Hopson and Byng; in the attack on Vigo bay they destroyed the Spanish "Plate fleet" and took great booty. Next year Shovell did establish the control over the western Mediterranean by the British fleet for just long enough to exhibit its decisive effects. Marlborough even

thought of seizing Toulon itself by a combined sea and land attack, but the dispositions of Louis were too prompt. A French army scared the Duke of Savoy into passivity, while the two fleets from Brest and Toulon sailed to meet each other off Gibraltar, hoping to crush Rooke between them. It was Shovell's turn again, as he was commanding the Channel fleet and guessed the French intentions. He therefore hurried to reinforce Rooke, so that the two English admirals joined first and found themselves off Gibraltar with good troops on board under an excellent German general, Prince George of Darmstadt. It may have been he who urged the seizure of the weakly-held fort on the great Rock. A vigorous assault carried Gibraltar without any great difficulty, but then began the harder task of keeping Gibraltar. Ably seconded by Shovell, Rooke beat off the French Toulon fleet at the battle of Malaga, one of many naval actions in which both sides claimed the victory. The Comte de Toulouse sailed home and the French sang *Te Deums* and struck medals. Rooke also sailed home, and received the thanks of Parliament, but he left Darmstadt and the Marines holding Gibraltar, and Admiral Leake, with a rather battered squadron, in Gibraltar bay, to achieve the dangerous and difficult task of holding the Rock against Spanish troops on land and French fleets from Toulon. A long siege followed. With indomitable courage the English and German garrison held out, supplied again and again with munitions and food by the skill and audacity of Leake, who throughout the winter raced to and fro, having a base in the Tagus estuary. Portugal had now joined the Alliance and allowed the British fleet to set up a dockyard and storehouses off Lisbon. While the navy thus held the Mediterranean gate, the Earl of Peterborough entered Barcelona (1705) and there installed the Austrian candidate, the Archduke, as "King Charles," to the delight of the Catalonians. Next year (1706), by a lightning march from Portugal, the Earl of Galway even reached and entered Madrid, but only to find out how little the capital meant to Spain. The resistance to the Allies had a centre in every province and Galway had very promptly to retire.

At last in 1708 Admiral Leake and General Stanhope secured the needful, permanent naval base in the Mediterranean. Together they took Port Mahon in Minorca, and from this splendid harbour the British fleet was able to face the Toulon fleets and to compel the Pope and the Duke of Tuscany to be really neutral. Gibraltar, though it commanded the Straits, had but a small harbour; Port Mahon could hold an entire navy and any amount of merchant shipping, so that the possession of the two made England mistress of the Mediterranean. The maritime power of France was thus cut in half.

In the meantime, Marlborough's scheme for a conclusive land campaign, either at Toulon or in the north, was constantly baffled by his Allies. The Dutch were suspicious of the English, the Emperor and the Duke of Savoy of each other: and though the

victory of Ramillies (1706) placed the whole of the Spanish Netherlands and the road to Paris at Marlborough's mercy, the Dutch would not consent to his advancing out of Flanders. Louis XIV astutely increased the dissensions of the Allies by suggesting terms of peace—not to the English, but to the Dutch, to whom he offered to give whatever they liked in Flanders besides large commercial concessions. The negotiation came to nothing, but France secured a breathing space in which to train fresh troops. Thus the advantages of the Ramillies victory were thrown away. A third great victory, at Oudenarde (1708), gave Marlborough Lille and opened the road to Paris a second time. At this point Louis XIV, for the third time, and now probably with sincerity, endeavoured to treat, even offering to relinquish the whole of the Spanish dominions and recall his grandson. But his record of deceitful treaties stood in his way. Marlborough suspected that he intended another peace of Ryswick, to be discarded as soon as the Allies had disarmed, and the French offers were therefore shelved. Besides, on learning his grandfather's offer, Philip V utterly refused to obey. "God has set the crown of Spain upon my head and I will maintain it while I have a drop of blood in my veins," he said. The obstinacy of their young king was endorsed by the Spanish people. They had accepted him, and whatever might occur in France or Flanders, Spain itself at least would never be conquered.

To test the genuineness of Louis' overtures the Allies then made the stipulation that, if 'the Duke of Anjou' refused to retire from Madrid, the King of France should join his troops with theirs to expel him. "If I must fight," cried the desperate Louis, "let me fight against my enemies and not against my own children." France was in a miserable condition, bankrupt, despoiled of her manhood, and on the verge of starvation. The extraordinary frosts of the winter 1708-9, which froze the Thames, had killed the fruit trees of Normandy and Provence, the vines of Gascony, and the corn of Anjou. Nevertheless a fresh campaign was opened, and Villars led a gallant, ragged and ill-fed army to the frontier, only to be shattered, after a desperate resistance, at Malplaquet (1709). It was a very costly victory: a courtier ventured to assure Louis—"If Heaven vouchsafe your Majesty's army another such defeat, your Majesty's enemies will be destroyed." It was impossible, therefore, for Marlborough to operate actively until he was reinforced, and during this delay France was saved from humiliation by the internal feuds of English party politicians.

Marlborough himself cared very little for either party. He had once been reckoned as a Tory, but as the Whigs were the more vigorous supporters of the war, he and Godolphin, supported at court by the powerful influence of the Duchess of Marlborough, had come to rely increasingly upon that party. Of their colleagues, Sunderland, Wharton, Somers and Lord Chancellor Cowper were strong Whigs. Harley, much respected for his fairness and know-

ledge, was not a keen party man. St. John, the young Secretary at War, was remarkable for brilliant talents but not for convictions. A wholly Whig Ministry would not please the Queen, who considered that the sovereign should be above party and possess some power of selection, and who was concerned about home questions as well as the war.

The quiet-tempered Queen Anne was not altogether a cipher. She was a religious-minded woman (as she had proved very practically), and she was indignant at the insults frequently inflicted upon the Church by certain of the Whig leaders, and at their reliance upon Dissenters and mobs. Modest and homely as she was, she had some feeling of her responsible position as well as a desire for a little comfort amid her round of duties, and for sympathy in her domestic griefs, and all these natural feelings were outraged by the now over-bearing temper of the Duchess of Marlborough. On ascending the throne, Anne had made her favourite Mistress of the Robes, Keeper of the Privy Purse, Groom of the Stole, and Ranger of Windsor Forest; her husband was Knight of the Garter, Captain-General of the Forces and Master of the Ordnance, and the pair therefore received an enormous income in salaries, besides the Woodstock estate and palace. But, while the Captain-General's sole control of the military resources of the kingdom was very greatly to its advantage, the sole control which his wife possessed over the Queen's court was very far from being an advantage to it or to her Majesty. The arrogant Duchess had come to accept Anne's personal friendship as her due, and used to lecture and scold the Queen as though she and her mistress were really upon the equal social level which Anne rejoiced to pretend, or even as though she were herself the superior. Habit and humility long kept Anne so tractable as to allow the Duchess her own way in politics, but her personal feelings inclined her to long for a change in the ministers who surrounded her just about the time (1708) when the Tories thought they had a chance of supplanting the Whigs. Like a large part of the nation, Anne had begun to agree with the Tories that the war had accomplished its true object, the break-up of the over-great power of France, and that, as England was bearing the brunt of it and had won most of the victories, she might well insist upon a peace and compel her greedy but shirking allies to accept one.

The men who made the prospect of such a change in party and policy seem possible were not old-fashioned country Tories but Godolphin's clever parliamentary colleagues, Harley and St. John, both of whom Marlborough believed to be as much attached to himself as they professed to be. Harley was a man of great ambition and was fired to action when he discovered that a kinswoman of his own had become a favourite with the Queen. Mrs. Masham (Abigail Hill) was a poor relation of the Duchess of Marlborough, who had quartered her in the royal household as a waiting-woman to Anne. A pleasant and unassuming woman, she gradually endeared herself to

her royal mistress. The Duchess exhibited jealousy and rudeness, and it was not difficult for the adroit Harley to show Mrs. Masham how to supplant her.

In Parliament, plenty of scope for party debates was offered by the management of the war. In the year 1707, after Ramillies, when the Ministry had rejected proposals for negotiation, the first united Parliament of the Kingdom of Great Britain had met, perturbed by French raids on the south coast of England. If French fleets could not retake Gibraltar or Minorea, their privateers could land raiding parties to burn country houses and villages, and had even captured merchant vessels in the Channel under the eyes of their too weak convoy. What was the Admiralty about? Why sweep the Mediterranean and leave the Channel to the French? In the course of a Tory attack on the Ministry for mismanagement of the war in Spain—where they had left Galway with a tiny force to suffer the decisive defeat of Almanza—Harley and St. John openly joined the Tories and aided them with evidence. The two had concluded that as leaders of the Tories they would rise to power faster than the Whigs would let them. But they were mistaken; for the time, Godolphin triumphed; he turned St. John and Harley out of office and shunted the blame for naval mismanagement on to the shoulders of the Lord High Admiral (1708).

Prince George, Anne's consort, held that great and lucrative dignity as a sinecure; the scandals of the Admiralty office were indeed notorious, but the ministers who had permitted such an arrangement were hardly entitled to make a personal attack on their puppet.

Anne was profoundly indignant. Her husband was dying, and in order to get the Whigs to put off the investigation she consented to give to Somers (whom she disliked) the great dignity of President of the Council, and presented him with a large gift of money (1708). But after the Prince's death she refused Marlborough's request to be made Captain-General for life, though she dared not yet show favour to the Tory party which Harley and St. John were re-organising.

Before the close of 1708, however, the Whigs drew down upon themselves a torrent of unpopularity which soon swept them away, by their impeachment of the notorious Sacheverell. Under the degrading pressure of party spirit the High Churchmen who had once been the disciples of Sancroft and Ken now gave audience to political pulpit orators. Sacheverell had been for some years a popular Tory preacher, when he contrived to satirise Godolphin personally in a sermon at St. Paul's, using the well-known nickname of *Volpone* (Foxy). Preachers of his type were simply political agitators, and Godolphin, greatly offended, thought to suppress them by inflicting punishment on Sacheverell.

The method chosen was the weighty one of impeachment. Sacheverell had spoken libellously of a minister and seditiously of

the Revolution ; and for this he was solemnly tried by the Commons before the Lords in Westminster Hall.

The effect was to make Sacheverell a popular hero : the cry of ' the Church in danger ' was ever since the Restoration one to excite the fervour of crowds. " God bless your Majesty," shouted the mob round the Queen's sedan-chair, " We hope your Majesty is for the Church and Dr. Sacheverell ! " The Lords were ill-pleased by the use of so grand an engine as impeachment for so trifling a matter. The stately trial ended in the verdict of *guilty*, but the imposition of an almost nominal sentence : the culprit was not to preach for three years. Sacheverell's fortune was made, of course, and the Ministry was doomed. The clerical demagogue journeyed to a new living in Shropshire like a national hero among applauding crowds on every road, Toryism radiating from his path. The Queen, convinced of the popular devotion to herself and the Church, became amenable to the wiles of Harley and made several changes in the less important posts. A Whig duke was reported to have visited Harley at night, hidden in a close-curtained sedan-chair. Godolphin suddenly realised himself to be powerless : the Whigs resigned, and the Queen dissolved Parliament (1710). Harley's new Ministry was composed wholly of Tories and the new Parliament showed a large Tory majority.

In the meantime the Whigs had begun some languid negotiations for peace, which throughout 1710 were going on at Gertruydenberg. But as war continued, without any armistice, Marlborough took several more of the border fortresses and drove the French from their fortified lines beside the La Bassée Canal. He was too short of men to do more, for the changes occurring in the Ministry at home left nobody zealous over a war which the Tories certainly meant to end.

The main difficulty in the way of peace was, that each of the Allies was intent upon its own particular ambition. The Emperor expected Spain for Archduke Charles, and the Whig Ministry and Parliament had publicly pledged themselves to secure to him the whole Spanish empire. " No peace can be safe and honourable until the whole monarchy of Spain be restored to the House of Austria," the House of Lords had repeated in 1708. The Dutch, however, expected at least some portions of Spanish Flanders and a commercial monopoly ; the English feared a Dutch monopoly, but themselves wanted Minorca, so as to control the Mediterranean. The Duke of Savoy, the Elector of Brandenburg (Prussia) and the King of Portugal also had their special aims. What the inhabitants of Spain, Flanders, Sicily, Naples, or Milan desired, nobody thought of inquiring.

The Tory ministers who came into power in the summer of 1710 were afraid to proceed openly and promptly to a peace, from fear of a financial panic in London, for the Bank and other capitalists were nervous as to their intentions. Also, they wished to appear

to preserve the national good faith with the Allies, while they were secretly arranging to desert them. "What we lose in Flanders we gain in England," said the French Foreign Minister to his colleague, and he set his agent in London to curry favour among the peers and the great ladies of Tory society.

At the beginning of 1711, Queen Anne screwed her courage to the pitch of dismissing the Duchess of Marlborough from all her offices. The Duke knelt long before her Majesty to implore her to relent, but Anne, who had taken several years to reach this point, was now immovable. He had to tell the haughty Duchess that the Queen asked for the Gold Key—her sign of office. The Duchess flung it on the floor; they might pick it up: the Duke carried it away, and then returned to Flanders and his thankless task of conducting a brilliant campaign of manœuvres and captures without any pitched battle. At the close of the year he was coolly dismissed and all the world then knew that Great Britain was about to make peace for herself. Already the unhappy British regiments in Spain and Minorca had been left without supplies or pay for months, while an informal offer of peace had been privately made in Paris by means of a well-known pamphleteer and poet (or journalist as he would now be called), Matthew Prior. "Do you wish for a peace?" he dramatically inquired. "It was like asking a drowning man if he wished to be saved," commented the French minister. Nevertheless, the Tories condescended to disgraceful perfidy in their fancy that they could cloak their proceedings from their allies. The Tory Duke of Ormond, one of the most chivalrous gentlemen of the age, was sent to Flanders as English General under Prince Eugene, who had succeeded Marlborough as Allied Commander-in-chief. A clear assurance had already been given to the Prince and the Dutch that the English forces would continue to fight as before. But St. John (now Lord Bolingbroke), the most subtle and unscrupulous of the new Cabinet, despatched to Ormond at the same time the celebrated "restraining orders" forbidding him to do any harm to the French forces, and the orders were also secretly communicated to the French government. In the face of the enemy and amid the hisses of his own soldiers, Ormond evacuated his camp and marched away to the Flemish coast, calmly informing the Dutch and Germans that he had concluded an armistice with the French in which he invited them to join (1712).

The Tory mode of peace-making was disgraceful in the extreme, but it was true enough that the main purpose of the war had been accomplished (in 1708), and that the Dutch and the Emperor were now requiring England to obtain benefits for them far larger than their contribution to the joint cause warranted. The preliminary concessions which Prior had insisted upon for Britain were—(1) the possession of Gibraltar, Port Mahon and Newfoundland; (2) the demolition of Dunkirk; (3) the transference of the *Asiento*, or permitted supply of negro slaves to the Spanish colonies, from the

French to the British, as well as an equal share in all other Spanish commerce. "We are a trading nation and must secure our traffic," said the London journalist. The Dutch secured a number of fortified towns on the Franco-Flemish frontier which they were to garrison as a barrier against France, as well as the right to close the Scheldt to traders of other nations (*i.e.* the right to choke Flemish trade) and some other commercial advantages.

These and the other preliminaries had to be approved by Parliament before the negotiations could go further. The Commons approved, but it was certain that the Lords, who were mostly Whigs, would not. The Queen, therefore, at the ministers' request, created as many as twelve peers in order to secure a majority, and the Whigs could only console themselves by the sarcastic query, as the new peers filed in, "Do you vote separately or by your foreman?" This proceeding is famous as a momentous instance of the Crown "swamping the Lords" to procure a ministerial triumph.

A congress met at Utrecht, and sat for over a year to settle the innumerable claims of the belligerents, and the *Peace of Utrecht* dates from the signatures in March 1713. The Peace consisted of a series of treaties which made considerable rearrangement in the government of several States.

(1) Spain and the Spanish Indies and American colonies were retained by Philip V.

(2) The Belgian provinces (but subject to the Dutch hold on their forts and commerce) went to the Hapsburgs, and were known as the *Austrian Netherlands* till the close of the eighteenth century.

(3) Austria also received Naples, Milan and Sardinia—in other words, became the dominant power in Italy.

(4) England kept her recently won Mediterranean bases, Gibraltar and Minorca, as well as Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and the Hudson's Bay Territory in North America, while the *Asiento*, or slave trade monopoly, was assigned to her merchants.

(5) The Dutch had their barrier of fortresses and commercial privileges, involving the ruin of Antwerp.

(6) The Duke of Savoy was entitled King of Sicily (changed later for Sardinia).

But the French protestant rebels in the Cévennes, and the gallant people of Barcelona and Catalonia who had fought for the Archduke Charles and still were holding out, were left unprotected. Philip V was known to intend to wreak vengeance upon the latter, and the English had definitely promised to secure the ancient Catalonian liberties, but Bolingbroke prevented the diplomatists from doing so: "it is not for the interest of England," he wrote; and he would even have sent the fleet to attack Barcelona but for the resistance of the House of Lords. The Catalans were therefore left to be massacred by Philip with the assistance of French forces.

The net result of the war and the peace was to strengthen immensely the maritime and colonial power of Britain ; to weaken Spain still further ; to ruin the finances and endanger the colonial prospects of France ; to hand Italy over to the Hapsburgs, and to exhaust the maritime strength of the Dutch past recovery, to the ultimate advantage of Britain.

VIII

THE PROTESTANT SUCCESSION

GEORGE I (1714–1727)

THE triumphant Tories had hardly secured the entire control of government before it became evident that they were likely to lose it very soon, for in 1713 Queen Anne's health began to fail rapidly, and after her the crown must pass (as settled in 1701) to the Electress Sophia of Hanover, or her son the Elector George. It was the Whigs who had drawn up the Succession Act and they were known to possess the confidence of the Elector of Hanover, with whom it must be difficult for Tories to find favour. His mother, the Electress Sophia, died just before Queen Anne.

The two principal Tory leaders had not the least intention of retiring into private life and each had his scheme for retaining power. St. John, now Viscount Bolingbroke, who was skilful in the arts of agitation, aimed at setting aside the Succession Act of 1701, and bringing in the son of James II (called the Prince of Wales by the Tories, and not by them alone), while his colleague Harley, now Earl of Oxford, who had far more prudence than Bolingbroke but lacked his courage, was trying to curry favour at Hanover by some tortuous negotiations which he kept to himself, intent upon securing his own place without much regard to his party. He did not believe a Stewart restoration possible, but he did not intend simply to follow the Whigs and lose his importance. He had cultivated a friendship with the Dissenters, and tried to make the Elector think that he could procure a large support for him. "Harley," declared a contemporary, "loved tricks, even when not necessary, from an inward satisfaction in applauding his own cunning." He and his especial party were nicknamed 'the Hanover Tories.' The two Tory leaders, then, were jealous of each other, and Bolingbroke contrived to persuade the Queen to dismiss Oxford from his office of Lord Treasurer, though the candidates for that office quarrelled too hotly for her to name any successor.

Anne herself was moved by that dislike of her lawful heirs which unreasonable people often cherish, and by a kind of remorseful tenderness towards the half-brother whom she had supplanted. If Prince James could have given any certain pledge for the safety

of the English Church, the Queen might have endorsed Bolingbroke's Jacobite plans. But no pupil of the Jesuits could give any pledge which Anne or the English people could possibly believe, and in the midst of these intrigues the Queen lay dying.

Bolingbroke's cleverness had not extended to making practical preparations, though the Jacobite Duke of Ormond was in command of the army, and in the absence of a Treasurer he himself was head of the Ministry. The Tory Council seemed paralysed by the not surprising tidings of the Queen's approaching death. Bishop Atterbury, who vowed he would proclaim 'James III' at Charing Cross in his robes if one peer would stand by him, found no supporter, and the puzzle was suddenly resolved by the two Whig Dukes of Argyll and Somerset, who presented themselves at the Council Chamber, claiming the ancient privilege of all privy councillors to attend the Council even if unsummoned. Thereupon the Duke of Shrewsbury—who had, long ago, joined in inviting William to England, had betrayed William to James, had repented and retired from politics and then had again joined in as a Tory—now reverted suddenly to his early principles, welcomed his brother dukes and accepted their invitation to become Lord Treasurer himself. No one durst object. Shrewsbury was led to the dying Queen's bedside and received her whispered approval as the staff of office was put into his hand. "Use it for the good of my people," she was reported to have said. Safeguarded by the Whig lords, Shrewsbury, as principal minister, ordered the proclamation of George, Elector of Hanover, as King of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Tories yielded to accomplished facts.

The Londoners and the people as a whole seemed to be quite apathetic towards either cause. People agreed that whichever Prince came over first would be King, "for out of ten that are for us nine will accommodate themselves rather than risk a civil war." Neither Prince hurried. Over a month elapsed before the Elector George reached London, but over a year had passed before the ex-Prince of Wales, whom the Whigs called the Pretender, contrived to make a tardy appearance in Scotland.

The establishment of the Hanoverian line on the throne resulted in securing the Whigs in office for over half a century, since the Tories were now practically identified with the Jacobites. It would have been futile for George I to imitate William's attempt to be above party, even had he wished it, for he knew well enough that the Whigs for their own sake must maintain him upon the throne, and in fact his want of interest in his new subjects and his inability to understand their language compelled him to leave the conduct of government to the English nobility. The acknowledged Whig leaders were now Lord Townshend, Lord Stanhope (to whom was assigned the credit of the recent capture of Minorca) and Robert Walpole, each of whom in turn assumed the lead.

But before the opening of Walpole's long and decisive ministry

(1721-42) several notable events occurred which altered the relations of England with the Continent.

A year after the accession of George I, Louis XIV died, and the policy of France was reversed. Louis XV was a child and the nearest prince of royal blood left in the country, the Duke of Orleans, became Regent. The Duke's policy, for his own sake and his country's, was peace, and to secure it he sought a good understanding with the maritime Power which could, if necessary, control Spain. For Philip V, whom France had placed on the Spanish throne, denied the right of his cousin Orleans to the regency and intimated that in the event of the sickly little King's death he should claim the throne.

The consequence was a reversal of the international relations which had prevailed for two generations, for English and other statesmen were alarmed by this new threat of a union of Spain and France. Dubois, the subtle minister of the regent Orleans, arranged with Stanhope an alliance of France with England, in which the Emperor and the Dutch were brought to join, known as the Quadruple Alliance of 1718. By further treaties with Prussia and with Sweden (1719) Stanhope succeeded in pacifying the maritime Powers along the Baltic, where Peter I of Russia and Charles XII of Sweden had for years kept up destructive wars, to the detriment of English and Dutch commerce. The progress of these pacifications deprived the Jacobite party of its hopes of fishing in troubled waters. An attempt had been made, just before the death of Louis XIV, when the rising known as 'The Fifteen' had exhibited the childish incompetence of the scanty group of gentry who were so heroically ready to sacrifice their lives and family fortunes for their hereditary king.

They got but little help from France, for Louis XIV was dying and his ministers dared not act boldly. But the sentiment of loyalty to the Stewarts was strong in Scotland, where, excepting Glasgow and Greenock, ports for the new colonial trade, the Union of 1707 had not yet produced the prosperity prophesied. Nevertheless the dread of Romanism, the old hatred of James II, which was still recollected, and the influence of the Hanoverian Duke of Argyll were strong enough to keep the Lowlands neutral, while dread of the duke's clan, the Campbells, disposed a good many Highland chiefs to keep quiet.

'James III,' or the Chevalier de St. George, as the French title ran, was himself a most conscientious, dull, resourceless man, and the Earl of Mar who engineered 'The Fifteen' was little more than a plausible schemer who had by turns been Whig, Tory and again Whig, and only turned Jacobite in 1714 on being snubbed by George I. 'Bobbing John' was his nickname, and his nomination by the Chevalier as chief alienated the Duke of Atholl, chief of the Murrays. Loyalty to the Stewarts brought, however, to the Rising, Lords Kenmure and Nithsdale, with their following of

Gordons and Maxwells, and there were a few eldest sons, who came out on the adventure while their fathers sagely remained 'loyal' at home.

The grandest figure was the splendid Marquis of Huntly, who arrived at Perth (on his celebrated steed *Florence*) at the head of a small army of the Gordons, over 3000 strong. His father, the Duke of Gordon, who had in 1688 been careful to help neither king, was content to remain in the dignified custody to which he had been wisely consigned, while Huntly moved forward with Mar to fall on Argyll and the troops of the government which had set out from Stirling. When the two bodies met upon Sheriffmuir the ballad justly describes the result :

" There's some say that we wan, and some say that they wan,
And some say that nane wan at a', man,
But one thing I'm sure, that at Sheriffmuir
A battle there was, that I saw, man.
And we ran and they ran, and they ran and we ran,
But *Florence* ran fastest of a', man."

So speedily did Huntly desert the cause which he at once saw to be hopeless, that he secured a pardon from George I on the ground of his promptitude, and he spent thenceforward an unharassed life, wealthy and courted, cherishing a platonic attachment to Romanism and Jacobitism, while he left his wife to bring up their children in protestant loyalty to the Crown.

Mar, who claimed a titular victory, was unable to see how to use it, and the English troops and Argyll penetrated to the heart of the country. Help from France came not, and the unhappy Prince James, who arrived too late to lead the Rising, could only return to France and beg his followers to save themselves.

Just as futile were the proceedings of the "handful of Northumberland fox-hunters" in the north of England, who followed Lord Derwentwater and Mr. Forster as far as Preston, unhindered but unhelped. There, the aspect of a body of Dutch troops, sent over by Marlborough, spread panic among their retainers, who fled, and the leaders, utterly bewildered, surrendered.

The ministers of George I neither wished the new dynasty to open with bloodshed and confiscations, nor that armed rebellion should become a game. A few of the convinced enthusiasts were sentenced to death, and Kenmure and Derwentwater were beheaded. Nithsdale escaped through the devotion of his wife; the escape of others was connived at. A number of Scottish soldiers were sent to the American plantations, where they made valuable colonists. Sentimental Jacobitism, such as Huntly's, the ministers were content to ignore so long as peace and order were undisturbed. In England, Jacobitism soon became little more than a romantic sentiment cherished by gentlemen who had no political ambitions and knew that they ran no risks, and the tone of mockery in the political ballads and skits of the time reflects truly enough

the temper with which this form of loyalty—or sedition—was regarded in England. For example, the celebrated satire on the two universities, to the more Whiggish of which George I had made a courteous acknowledgment in the form of a gift of books for the University Library, just at the moment when the Ministry had thought it necessary to overawe the other, the Tory stronghold, by the presence of a body of cavalry :

“ The King discerning with impartial eyes
The needs of both his universities,
To Oxford sent a troop of horse—and why ?
That learned body wanted loyalty.
To Cambridge books he sent, as well discerning
How much that loyal body wanted learning.”

To which a Whig made reply :

“ The King to Oxford sent a troop of horse,
For Tories own no argument but force :
To wiser Cambridge books he wisely sent,
For Whigs allow no force but argument.”

The only region where danger to the national peace might lurk was the Highlands, and this region was shortly placed under the control of a practical soldier of much ability, General Wade, who had been second-in-command to several more aristocratic commanders, notably at the taking of Minorca. He was empowered to carry out his own scheme of constructing main roads which should enable cavalry and artillery to penetrate quickly into any district, while at the same time peaceful trade and intercommunication was encouraged. Several years of well-paid work, as well as the friendly and just manners of Wade himself, went a long way towards conciliating the people. The clans were partially disarmed, but their military tendencies were satisfied by the enrolment of a certain number as a special body of troops. This was the origin of the famous *Black Watch*, so named from their dark-coloured tartans, contrasting with the uniforms of the *Reds*, as the English soldiers were termed.

The chain of roads speedily came to be regarded as a boon, as recorded by the celebrated distich once to be read at Inverary :

“ Had you seen these roads before they were made
You would hold up your hands and bless General Wade.”

Toryism had no more opportunities in Scotland for a long time, for experience had been teaching, ever since 1689, that prosperity lay in cultivating harmony with England, and the establishment of the Hanoverian kings ensured the predominance of Whigs in Scottish government till 1770.

The Rising of the 'Fifteen was the occasion of a change in the recent law for the duration of parliaments. According to the rule made by the Triennial Act, an election should have taken place

exactly while the rebellion was in progress, and in order to avoid this the old Parliament passed the *Septennial Act* (1716), which decreed that parliaments should last for not more than *seven* years (instead of *three*), and that the new rule should apply to the sitting Parliament. The unconstitutional action of the House in prolonging its own season of power was gravely censured : it recalled the self-protective acts of the Long Parliament. But the step was taken honestly to meet an emergency and was not made a precedent, no such dubious Act being again passed till the twentieth century. The change to seven years was recognised as a gain for the stability of the House of Commons.

The establishment of the Hanoverian line upon the throne inevitably produced some further effects than the simple endorsement of the Constitution of 1689.

Anne and Mary had been Queens of the old royal House. Now a chasm parted the throne from the people. George I, and even George II, was far more of an alien to England than was Philip V to Spain, or Catherine II to Russia. The old, instinctive loyalty was killed. It was hardly possible for anybody to cherish for the new royal line any warmer sentiment than gratitude, a sentiment which the Whig aristocracy would have felt it degrading to entertain. Nor did any personal attraction in the founder of the new royal family mitigate his distasteful foreign manners. The elderly George had never felt any desire or respect for his British kingdoms. He had always steadily declined to learn English and was only happy among the knot of Germans he brought over with him. His morals were known to be as gross as those of James II, and his callous cruelty seemed the more detestable for being exercised upon his own family. Everyone knew how he had imprisoned his wife and persecuted his son and daughter-in-law, and how he had deprived them of their eldest son, whom he insisted on educating in Germany, as a German. He drank, fed, smoked and behaved—the nobility considered—like a farmer; and he grasped avidly at money, which he never spent in London.¹

Thenceforward the court almost ceased to exert any influence upon Society, where manners, fashions and tastes were dictated by the cliques of the aristocracy for nearly a hundred years. The Church, bound to the throne by political chains, became partially atrophied; a technical loyalty, an actual bondage to expediency, confirmed the hierarchy in secularity. If Literature and Art did not suffer from a similar enslavement to materialism, they could draw no manner of inspiration, let alone any sort of encouragement, from either George I or George II.

The political views of George I were concentrated solely upon his German Electorate. He would hardly have been profoundly grieved had he been restored to it by a Stewart restoration. The

¹ For tales of him see Thackeray, *The Four Georges* (I), or Greenwood, *Hanoverian Queens* (I).

old cronies with whom he passed his leisure and pleasure fully expected such an event and were simply concerned to bestow as much money and jewels as possible in Hanover before it should occur. The King detested his son George, now Prince of Wales, and seemed to take a positive pleasure in allowing the Crown to be despoiled of power or wealth for the future. The spectacle of royal family spite was new to this nation, which soon began to treat the Hanover royal family with contemptuous mockery, expressed in Whig, as well as in Tory, circles with ever-increasing impudence.

Ministers, however, could not treat royal wishes with neglect, for the nomination of ministers and all other officials still depended on royal authority, and if the new King could not understand English he was accompanied by several clever German ministers who could, or to whom, at all events, French was perfectly familiar. They and their King-Elector had to be conciliated, and so, in spite of the Acts of Settlement and Succession, Great Britain did come to be involved, from time to time, with the foreign interests of Hanover.

It was impossible, in any case, to compel other governments to discriminate between the respective dominions of the King-Elector, so that from 1714 till 1837 the enemies of England regarded Hanover as her vulnerable spot, while the Hanoverians naturally claimed that Great Britain ought to protect them from suffering on her account. England, therefore, at once found herself entangled in a set of rivalries which she had been most anxious to avoid. Her own commercial interests, and still more the imperative needs of her navy, required free access to the Baltic coasts, whence came the chief supply of the timber, masts, hemp and tar, on which her ships depended. But Hanover lay open to the warlike Baltic Powers;—the formidable military State of Sweden, under Charles XII, the active maritime State of Denmark-Norway, and two new powers, Prussia and Russia, which at that time had barely emerged into fame, the one from a collection of small principalities, the other from a vast unexplored background of savagery.

Sweden had for a long time held possession of the old bishoprics of Bremen and Verden, two tiny city-states lying between Hanover and the North Sea. Denmark, having taken them from Sweden, offered them for sale to George I, on condition that England should join in the war on Sweden. With English money Bremen and Verden were bought (1716) and annexed to Hanover, while an English fleet was sent into the Baltic, and although it did nothing active, it is little wonder that the fiery King of Sweden vowed that he would have the Stewarts restored and began negotiating with Spain to that intent. The result was that another futile rising was attempted in Scotland (1719) and that we had to fight Spain in the Mediterranean, where Byng won a victory off Cape Passaro (1718). Even when the death of Charles XII (1718) had put an end to danger from that quarter the English ministers had to foil their King's effort to drag

them into a fresh Baltic quarrel, this time with Russia. George wished the fleet to raid Petersburg and carry off the Czar Peter, and it was difficult to persuade him that such mediaeval methods were obsolete.

What gave George I his hold on the Whig ministers was the fact that there were not enough offices to go round among the crowd of nobles and gentry, with their Scottish and Irish supporters, who expected to be rewarded by some post of profit or dignity. The Whigs were now too numerous and too triumphant to be harmonious. Cliques formed round influential men who made the gratification of their friends a point of honour, and they intrigued to wrest office from each other. For about a hundred years these jealousies, and the increasing demands made by noble and political families for salaries and pensions, formed a very powerful factor in English politics, at times the most powerful, as George I, George II and George III successively discovered. To them were due some rapid changes in the Ministry in the early part of the reign of George I. Lord Townshend, his relative Robert Walpole, and William Pulteney, who all opposed the complication of English policy by Hanoverian interests, were obliged to resign in 1716, and power was monopolised by Lord Stanhope, and the Earl of Sunderland, Marlborough's son-in-law, supported by others of the Marlborough connection—particularly the two Craggs, the public-spirited and fashionable man-of-letters, Addison, and Aislabie, who, like the Craggs, was a financier. Addison, however, was soon obliged by failing health to retire on an enormous pension.

This Ministry carried a further instalment of tolerance by repealing the Occasional Conformity Act and the Schism Act (1718), established an Anglo-German guarantee of peace by the Quadruple Alliance of England, France, Holland and Austria, procured a peace with Spain (1720), and endeavoured both to gratify the royal prejudices and to assure their own permanent tenure of power by a further alteration of the Constitution, which failed.

The King's feud with his unlucky son offered an excellent opportunity for personal parties to form. Neither the Prince of Wales nor his sagacious wife, Princess Caroline, wished to be the centre of political intrigue, but when George I went so far as to forbid anyone who visited the Prince of Wales to come to court, it was obvious that those who were hopeless of reaching power and rank under George I would seek the favour of his heir, and not only Tories but such Whigs as thought it well to provide for the future began to collect round the Prince's court at Leicester House (where now is Leicester Square). Foreigners drew the sweeping conclusion that the English Constitution, by making an organised opposition a feature of Parliament, caused a feud between King and Prince to be inevitable: the heir must patronise the Opposition lest it should depose the royal family, as it had done twice already!

The King and Stanhope, then, designed a *Peerage Bill*, which

sought to take from the Crown the power of making new peers, except for a small number, in order, as was professed, to prevent the monarch from being able to alter the majority by creating more peers, as had been done in 1713. That this would make the House of Lords the supreme authority in the kingdom was evident. The Lords therefore passed the Bill, and George I prepared to make all the new creations himself, so that his son should make none. It was Robert Walpole, who, regardless of the King's or the Lords' desires, induced the House of Commons to reject it (1718). In two years' time Walpole was borne to the head of the Ministry by the waves of a crisis which was neither political nor royal, but financial and popular.

IX

WALPOLE'S PEACE (1721-42)

GEORGE II (1727-60)

(i)

ONE of the characteristics of the eighteenth century is the prominence given to money by political and fashionable society. Not that monied wealth had ever been underrated in this country, but that, in the eighteenth century, an age of betting, gambling and speculation, there seems to have been a keener thirst to acquire it, by whatever methods. It was, for instance, taken for granted that those who had the handling of public funds would make a profit by it: that persons who possessed influence, or knowledge, would sell it; that a bribe handsome enough could hardly be refused by a sane man. The convenient theory was adopted that only he who offered a bribe was blameable, not the simple-minded gentleman who pocketed it. Ministers used the balances of public funds for themselves, so that the most lucrative, and therefore most desirable, offices were those of the treasurers and paymasters of the Navy and Army. Navy or Army officers and ministerial chiefs got fees for placing every contract, while such large profits could be made out of appointments in the royal household, or in such government departments as the Mint, the Treasury, the Ordnance, that they were sought by the most aristocratic persons, who considered themselves above attending to such affairs and appointed humble deputies to do the actual business. Responsibility thus disappeared, and the scandalous system of sinecures (meaning offices carrying salaries but no duties) rapidly ruined the efficiency of government at the same time that the expense of it was soaring higher and higher.

Much the same spectacle was to be seen on the Continent, and after the peace of 1713 the whole of society, whether in poverty-stricken France or wealthy England, became possessed by the fond belief that it was possible to get rich easily and quickly by some species of luck. The age of gamblers and highwaymen and pirates offers also the most famous example of speculation, the South Sea Bubble. What the philosopher's stone was to the Middle Ages, and buccaneering to the Elizabethans, that the mystery of dealing in *shares* was in the 'Bubble' years of 1718-20.

The South Sea Company was formed to utilise the commercial concessions made by Spain to England in the Treaty of Utrecht. These were precisely defined, and therefore the privilege of trading with Spanish colonies had to be confined to a select body which the government could control. Enormous profits were anticipated and the rush to join the Company (by purchasing shares) made the price of the shares rise higher and higher, till at last £1000 was given for a share of £100, and a special Act of Parliament was passed to enable the King himself to become a director.

Paris was just then wildly excited over a somewhat similar company, formed to open up Louisiana and the Mississippi trade. With it was connected a bank, set up by a Scotchman, Law, with the Regent's sanction, which issued paper money—bank-notes. Bank-notes were then, as now, simply 'promises to pay': coin was given by the bank in exchange for the paper—when asked for. But the idea spread that these notes were a new, almost magical, form of capital, and that notes alone (that is really, credit) could finance commercial undertakings. The bank itself speculated wildly and for two years the French accepted the paper money as if it were coin and believed themselves to be rolling in wealth. When at last people discovered that they could not exchange the bank-notes for coin, credit vanished and a universal bankruptcy ensued.

The speculating fever of Paris spread to London and the South Sea 'Bubble' (as it was soon named), though much the largest, was not the only concern in which shares rose to an enormous price. Enthusiasts seized the moment to announce all manner of undertakings which only required subscriptions (purchase of shares) to bring in enormous profits; over 150 companies were floated, for all kinds of purposes, from working Welsh copper and Cornish tin to making flying machines, or turning sawdust into deal boards. Noblemen and fine ladies, financial magnates, clergymen, servants, beggars, peasants, gamblers and cheats, choked Change Alley and all the neighbouring streets till they looked like a fair and a court drawing-room combined. The street where the South Sea House stood could scarcely be penetrated for the dense throng struggling to buy—or standing about to sell—*shares*. The possession of *shares* seemed to the public to mean a fortune without toil or trouble. Many were the tales of servants or small tradesmen who had bought shares and sold them again at vast profits, and "from being scarcely able to purchase a dinner were now exalted in coaches" and owners of large estates.

From this whirlpool of speculation the Bank of England stood aloof. But the ministers supposed that the South Sea Company could do more for the public, and certainly more for their individual selves, than the Bank could. They wanted to pay off the whole National Debt, and the Company, in return for larger parliamentary grants of trade monopoly, offered to take over the Debt and give

the lenders shares instead of their capital, so that they should receive South Sea dividends instead of government interest. The Bank Directors thought that this would ruin the Bank and opposed the plan, and then the Company, regarding possession of the Debt as a great advantage, distributed heavy bribes to procure the support of powerful persons, including the two Secretaries of State (Sunderland and Craggs), the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Aislabie), the King's German ministers and favourites, and some other eminent persons. The transfer of the Debt from the Bank to the Company was then sanctioned by Parliament, and the Company at once began to assert its monopoly and brought an action against some speculative companies which had infringed it. Those companies at once collapsed and their shareholders found themselves ruined. Public confidence received a shock on beholding *credit* thus vanish, and all holders of shares at once wanted to sell them. Company after company became bankrupt, and South Sea stock itself fell bit by bit to about 133 per cent., so that numbers of the new buyers were ruined when they sold their shares. "Such a scene of misery appeared amongst traders that it was almost become unfashionable not to be a bankrupt."

The panic in the commercial world spread instantly to Parliament, and the Houses, in December 1720, challenged ministers to clear themselves of the accusations of bribery which were being made against them on all hands. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was expelled and sent to the Tower, Sunderland resigned all his posts rather than face inquiry, the Secretary to the Treasury only just escaped impeachment, three other ministers died suddenly, of fright, and so in a few weeks the Ministry had disappeared.

It took a cool head, in the universal panic, to perceive that land and gold, ships and goods, still remained as solid as before, and that only individuals, and not the State, had been injured. Robert Walpole possessed that cool head, and his record of steady, sensible action during past years convinced the London citizens of his honesty and capacities. Character was more important now than cleverness.

(ii)

Walpole accepted office, constructed a Ministry (1721), and allayed the panic without shedding anyone's blood. The popular cry for scapegoats was mildly satisfied by passing a Bill to confiscate the profits made by the South Sea directors—not that the Act was altogether carried out. Another Act annulled the contract made over the National Debt, which was still to be dealt with, after all, by the Bank of England. By these means some of the sufferers were compensated, and, more important, general confidence in the government, the Bank, and the Company was restored. The last became again very flourishing as a commercial concern, even to the point of provoking Spanish resentment and so leading eventually to a fresh outbreak of international strife.

Sir Robert Walpole remained at the head of the government for twenty years (1721-42). He may be regarded as the first real Prime Minister (though that title was not yet used), for he was a supreme minister, not one among equals, and although during his lifetime the mere epithet of *sole* or *first* minister was often hurled at him as if it was, of itself, sufficient to prove his position unconstitutional, yet ever afterwards the existence of a supreme or leading minister was accepted as a practical necessity, and one or two attempts to do without one failed ignominiously. Walpole had reached power because he commanded Parliament's confidence rather than the King's, but he had the wisdom to cultivate the royal goodwill, and his sagacity and straightforwardness enabled him to win the confidence of two successive sovereigns. On the other hand, his position differed widely from that of modern (nineteenth-century) Prime Ministers, in that he was not the nominee of his party but its master, and his masterfulness offended so many of his party that in time they turned him out. He was a notable specimen of the country gentleman as distinct from the fashionable nobility, popular among the Norfolk squires and in the busy Norfolk ports and manufacturing towns; a great planter and builder, a hard-riding sportsman, something of a Latin scholar but unable to speak French, a collector of fine pictures, and, like many another Norfolk gentleman of his own and earlier ages, as well acquainted with the banks and warehouses of London as with the farms of his own county. He had a wide knowledge of European affairs, which enabled him to lay a safe course for the Ship of State, and, above all, he had the firm resolution to keep for eighteen years to the policy he knew to be wise.

Peace, Walpole was convinced, was the one safeguard of the new dynasty and all that depended upon it—and upon it did depend a great deal. The preservation of Great Britain from Jesuit and foreign interference, the maintenance of Protestantism and of the parliamentary government, and all the provisions for personal liberty procured by the Revolution of 1688, necessarily hung upon the Hanoverian dynasty. With this political system was involved, as Walpole and most business men believed, that maritime and commercial development which the recent changes and wars had stimulated, and therewith the prosperity and contentment of those classes of the nation which, in contemporary opinion, formed its more important part.

Peace abroad and tranquillity at home were not so easy to preserve as might be thought. Though Walpole's rule is sometimes called a policy of inaction, it was not his own inaction. From Petersburg to Rome, and from the plains of Poland to the spice islands of the Pacific, the world was at that time agitated by ambitious sovereigns and ministers, by claimants and plotters, by rival commercial companies, rival speculators, smugglers and pirates. Colonies were striving to strangle each other, competitors

for crowns were making secret intrigues for war, while even at home competing trades and interests were scheming and petitioning against each other. From the monarchs of Austria and Spain to the pirates in the West and East Indies, they all saw their profit in fomenting disturbances. In England, every refusal to co-operate or to intervene stirred somebody's indignation, and the minister had to steer his country and his sovereign, his party and himself, among the whirlpools of spite and the rocks of vested interests. Yet he did so, successfully, for eighteen years. The Stewart-Jesuit plots, hatched sometimes in Rome and sometimes in Spain, were carefully watched; for Walpole kept up an extremely good foreign intelligence; and after Bishop Atterbury was sent to the Tower in 1722, the increasing quiet at home afforded little ground for further intrigue for a long time.

When Austria and Spain, in 1725, prepared for war on Britain, a part of which would, of course, be a Stewart rising, Walpole secured the alliance not only of France but of Russia (by the Treaty of Hanover), which prevented Austria from moving, while English naval pressure, without any continental effort, gradually drove Spain to make the Peace of Seville (1729).

Walpole's peace policy was cordially endorsed by Cardinal Fleury, the minister who ruled France, and was as anxious for peace as Walpole. Nor was it till 1733 that rivalries over the Polish election of a new king resulted in the continental *War of the Polish Succession*. There were no serious English interests involved, and though George II, as a German, was intensely interested, Walpole was able through Queen Caroline to restrain him from joining in it.

The death of George I in 1727 had not altered Walpole's position. The maltreatment which George I had inflicted on his son had caused a general expectation that some rival Whig families who detested Walpole would now come into power, and George II had intended to satisfy expectations by making Sir Spencer Compton, member of an eminent noble family and a well-known court official, his principal minister. But though Compton had been for years Speaker of the House of Commons, he was so entirely ignorant of his new duties that he went to Walpole to learn what to do. It was not difficult for the sagacious Queen Caroline to bring George II to continue in office the minister who had hitherto been so successful, and Compton was compensated with a peerage.

Incessantly occupied by foreign, Scottish or Irish agitations, now on behalf of the Stewarts, now over new taxes, or conditions of coinage, Walpole expended rather less attention upon the party rivalries of the Whigs at home. He had conceded a further instalment of justice to the protestant Nonconformists, in 1727, by relieving them from the antiquated restrictions of the Test Act and Corporation Act. He characteristically refused to repeal the Acts themselves, partly because they involved safeguards against

Romanists, partly because he was well aware what violence could easily be aroused by the cry of 'the Church in danger,' but an annual *Bill of Indemnity* was thenceforth passed in Parliament to dispense with the legal penalties for protestant Nonconformists who had not observed the Acts.

But Walpole could not satisfy all the political sections among the ambitious Whigs except by yielding power to them, which meant either modifying his policy to suit their views, or giving places of importance or high salaries to their nominees and supporters instead of to his own. He never would surrender power, and within three years of his accession to office he had taught his colleagues that his policy must be endorsed by the entire body of ministers. Carteret, who was a favourite with George I and who desired a 'spirited' foreign policy, was obliged to relinquish the conduct of foreign affairs and accept the lucrative and dignified post of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. To supply his place Walpole took the Pelhams—the Duke of Newcastle and his brother Henry. They were wealthy and industrious men; the Duke controlled a number of seats, that is, of votes, in the House of Commons, and Henry Pelham was an intelligent man, and unhampered by any original views in carrying out Walpole's instructions.

Another eminent colleague, Lord Townshend, next found himself edged out of power by the masterful First Lord. In his studiously homely style Sir Robert explained that "the firm must be Walpole and Townshend, not Townshend and Walpole," and Townshend (1730) retired into private life, where he did more service to his country by his experiments in agriculture than, probably, he had ever done in politics.

There were other great personages who were less 'constitutional' than Carteret and Townshend and more vindictive in their attitude to the 'wicked minister' who insisted on controlling all the general policy of the government. William Pulteney, on whom Walpole had bestowed only a lucrative position in the royal household, had in his indignation promptly justified the minister's want of confidence in him by joining the Opposition just before the death of George I. His ability as an orator and writer easily made him the leader of that party which had long been known as the "Hanover Tories," once followers of Harley. They were no Jacobites, but supported the Church and the maintenance of a royal prerogative while opposing the Whig principles, or rather practices, of commercialism and ministerial independence of the Crown. They looked for support to the country gentry, and were quite ready to accept help from Jacobites, and even Germans, in the business of upsetting Walpole, whom they loudly accused of being jealous of all talent. His peaceful foreign policy they called ignoble, and his mastery of the government, unconstitutional.

Walpole, however, did not turn out of office all able men, and among his loyal colleagues was the great lawyer and statesman

Philip Yorke, better known by his later title as Lord Hardwicke, who made more mark on English history than many a nominal Prime Minister.

Hardwicke's tenure of power, both during and after Walpole's time, is marked by some great reforms. (a) The whole proceedings of the law courts were at last ordered to be carried on in English; up to 1733 the ancient use of Latin and French had not been entirely abandoned. (b) The principle of tolerance became more and more the working practice of the law, and the accused person was given much more protection in defending himself. (c) The laws on witchcraft, which had been made very severe by James I and were cruelly enforced throughout the seventeenth century, were now repealed and prosecutions for this offence were forbidden (1736). (d) Acts of Indemnity were continually passed to pardon numbers of persons who had unintentionally broken the law by failure to observe punctually dates or forms legally prescribed, while careful provision was frequently made, by special Acts, for Quakers, Moravians and others who scrupled to take the loyal oaths which were obligatory on subjects in general. (e) Other Acts were passed to help shopkeepers, servants and wage-earning employees to get their bills or wages paid, and they were given power of appeal from the magistrate if they felt themselves unjustly treated, a right which, even if they did not often use it, was a considerable check upon the haste or partiality of the local J.P.

The more successful Walpole's policy of tranquillity appeared to be, the more virulent grew the attacks made upon him by the Opposition. Pulteney, wealthy and popular, almost the arbiter of London society, advertised the purity of his own motives by announcing that he never would degrade himself by accepting political office. He was therefore as untrammelled by thoughts of future responsibility as by regard for truth or reason. Walpole, it was said, "feared Pulteney's tongue more than any other man's sword" (which was literally true enough, for Sir Robert was no coward), and behind Pulteney stood the skilful Carteret, the malicious Chesterfield—that "dwarf baboon" as George II called him, whose mind was more crooked than his body; the Jacobite Tories, led by the highly respected Wyndham, the model of an honourable gentleman; and a party of men who called themselves 'patriots,' among them the factious Lord Cobham, with the young Grenvilles and their friend William Pitt. Some of these 'patriots' were so notoriously self-seekers that Walpole's scorn of them was well deserved: "I have raised many of them in one night," he said, "it is but refusing to gratify an unreasonable or insolent demand, and up starts a patriot." Nevertheless, among them there was one to whom the name would really apply, Cornet Pitt.

Out of Parliament, but energetic in all the pamphlet and society warfare of opposition, Walpole had a vindictive enemy in Bolingbroke, whose pardon had been purchased by French gold from

one of George I's German favourites, and who was able to pull strings in the Jacobite or French, or Spanish, courts as easily as in English society. Walpole never allowed him to take his seat in the House of Lords, and he, in return, ceaselessly worked to ruin Walpole. George II was unalterable in his support of the minister—"It is for my life, Sir Robert, and it is for your life," he once told him. And only after many years did the Opposition, recognising that the King would never dismiss Walpole, succeed in engineering a great public outcry against him. This they contrived when, in 1733, he produced an excellent scheme for reforming the finances, by substituting EXCISE for Customs. The Customs duties were, of course, levied at the ports, and the smuggling trade had by this time grown into a vast system which compelled the government to keep a host of revenue searchers and coastguards to cope with them. Quantities of goods were known to escape paying duty, and the revenue suffered heavily.

Walpole proposed to have wine, tobacco and some other foreign produce taxed at the warehouses where they were stored, all over the realm, just as British-made spirits and beer were already taxed, and to issue licences to the retail dealers. Both warehouses and shops could then be inspected and it would be easy to detect fraud. This new excise would, he believed, greatly increase the revenue, and he therefore lowered the land tax, which from the Revolution had stood at four shillings. At the same time he intended to charge no duty upon goods brought into our ports in order to be re-exported, a measure which would have been of enormous advantage to the American colonies and would have made London, as he claimed, "the market of the world."

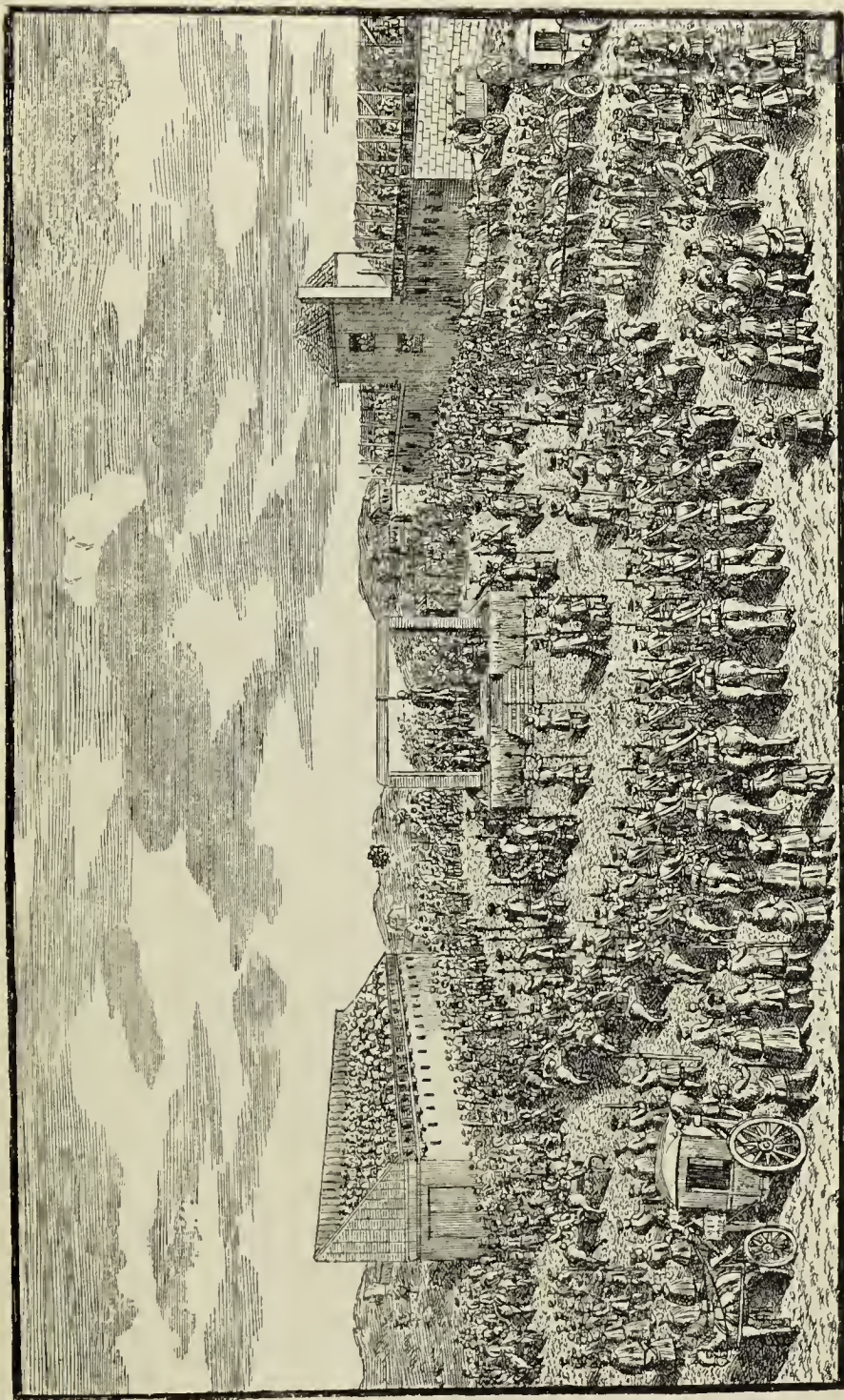
But the Opposition informed the public that the excise on wine and tobacco, currants, lace, etc., was but the beginning of the wicked minister's plan for a 'General Excise,' when every article of consumption would be taxed and nothing sold without a licence. Prying and brutal excise officers would force their way into every shop and kitchen and outrage every family; then no longer would the Englishman's house be his castle. The soldiers were told that the price of tobacco would rise beyond their means, and were so wrought upon that they actually reached the verge of mutiny. Pulteney's amusing weekly paper, *The Craftsman*, was filled with every kind of exaggeration, and assured the public that Walpole was aiming at the creation of a despotism like that of France, which had reduced the people to a condition of starvation and the misery of wearing clogs instead of shoe-leather: "Liberty, property and No Excise," was the motto of the politicians who raised the storm. "No slavery—no excise—no wooden shoes!" yelled the mobs in answer in the streets of London and all the large towns.

In vain did Walpole argue or explain, and in vain the King and Queen assured him of their support. Not from fears for himself—he faced a violent mob at the very door of the House—but from a

conviction that the Act, though he might be able to force it through the Houses, could not be carried out without bloodshed, did Walpole give way. He withdrew the Bill, and a reform which would have ended the scandalous disorders of the courts, and saved many scores of lives, had to wait for half a century and the younger Pitt. This was practically to acknowledge that he was beaten by the union of interests against him, and the Opposition hoped that he would resign. But George II, who admired his minister's courage as heartily as did Queen Caroline his ability, refused to accept his resignation. "You and I will stand or fall together," he said. The sole alternative Walpole held to be the creation of a complete and genuine unity within the government itself, by ending the old loose system which had left it open to a Chancellor or a Secretary of State, and to Chamberlains, Lords-Lieutenant, Generals and Colonels, to vote as they liked upon ministerial bills. In Walpole's view all who served the King should serve the King's minister, like a kind of political army: by this plan he would be an absolute minister and his sovereign might appear to be an absolute monarch ruling by deputy.

A series of dismissals took place, and all the new officials were men pledged to support the minister under all circumstances. This plan was afterwards adopted, as to government posts, as the only way of obtaining co-operation among the members of each administration, but at the time it did not strengthen Walpole himself so much as it strengthened the Opposition, for it appeared to warrant the accusation that Walpole was jealous of talent. Walpole felt no jealousy of talent unless it opposed his own. One of his staunchest subordinates was Henry Fox, and another the sagacious Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, who in this year, 1733, attained that great eminence, which he held for a quarter of a century.

The lengths to which Walpole would go in order to avoid unpopularity, and to which the populace could go with impunity, were exhibited in the celebrated 'Porteous Riot' at Edinburgh (1736). The Scotch resented Customs duties even more fiercely than did the English, holding them to be marks of an alien tyranny. The condemnation of a certain smuggler to death aroused so furious an outcry in Edinburgh that the city authorities, expecting a riot, directed Captain Porteous to take command of the town guard for the day of the execution and to provide them with ammunition. The magistrates then took themselves out of the way. The sentence was duly executed; the angry mob stoned the executioner and the guard, and some of the soldiers fired their muskets, killing or wounding sundry of the rioters. Captain Porteous contrived to avoid further tumult, but the magistrates endeavoured to protect themselves from the popular rage by making him a scapegoat. They ordered his arrest as a 'murderer,' sent him for a trial before a jury of the townsmen, and on his being declared 'guilty' and sentenced to death, paid no more attention to him. Others, however,



A FAMOUS EXECUTION. EARL FERRERS HANGED AT TYBURN, 1760, FOR THE MURDER OF HIS STEWARD.

petitioned the Crown for mercy and a reprieve was granted, which indicated a probable commutation of the sentence to transportation. The mob, however, unhindered, deliberately forced the prison, seized Porteous and hanged him.

This outbreak Walpole refused to take any notice of; his supporters, Argyll and Hay, required immunity for the city and its magistracy, and their satisfaction was more important than the vindication of the law. A fine of a paltry sum of money to be paid to Porteous' widow was the only penalty inflicted on the unjust judges.

It was over foreign policy that the tenacious minister was at last turned out. The activity of British traders in the South Seas and on the South American coasts was a perpetual irritant to the Spaniards. The British, for example, interpreted the permission to send *one* ship a year as meaning that the one ship might go in and out of the Spanish harbour any number of times, so they used to despatch an entire fleet of tenders which, remaining at a safe distance, continually replenished the privileged one. To stop this, as well as the practices of smugglers and pirates, the Spaniards enforced as severely as they could their undoubted right to search unauthorised ships in their colonial waters, and the incidents which resulted bred an angry temper in both nations, each of which considered itself outraged by the other. The Opposition fanned the popular discontent in order to defeat Walpole, and when at length he perceived that he could neither silence the clamour for war with Spain nor by his diplomacy satisfy Spanish claims for compensation, he for a moment cheated them of their triumph by himself declaring war upon Spain (1739). Joy peals were actually rung in the London churches: "They are ringing their bells now," the old minister is reported to have said; "they will be wringing their hands soon."

It was not difficult for the Opposition leaders to accuse Walpole of mismanaging the war and obstructing the naval command. He was no great War Minister and, in fact, made war mildly, apparently with the view of not irritating our enemy past placating. Glover's ballad, *Admiral Hosier's Ghost*, made famous one peculiar instance of his pacifist methods. But Walpole was now overmatched by a combination of European disturbances beyond his powers to allay, and in 1742, when a new Parliament met, he was defeated in a division on a technical question and saw himself compelled at last to resign office.

X

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY GOVERNMENT

JUST as in the seventeenth century men cast their thought and speech into theological forms, so in the eighteenth they habitually thought in the terms and temper of politics. The abiding impression made on other nations by the English system of government in the eighteenth century was one of stability. It was a desirable impression, since for more than two centuries the fickleness of this nation had been proverbial. "The English would hate an Angel if they had chosen him for King," wrote the Duchess of Orleans (and how much more George I, was her insinuation).¹ Yet during the Hanoverian epoch the staunchness of nation and government was increasingly remarkable, till in the revolutionary age it became the envy of the Continent.

This steadiness of government and of English credit, orderliness and maritime strength was understood to be due to that famous but mysterious invention, the *English Constitution*. There was really nothing very remarkable about England, Queen Caroline occasionally liked to tell Walpole, except its *Constitution*. This Constitution was, of course, that which was first put in writing in the Bill of Rights (1689) as interpreted by subsequent custom. No one dreamed after 1689 of questioning the supremacy of Parliament. It was, however, necessary that the two Houses should agree, and that they habitually did so, seldom differing save upon minor issues from 1689 to 1830, is, perhaps, the most remarkable feature of our parliamentary history. This harmony really rested, less upon the sacred provisions of 1689 than upon two unwritten customs, one social, one political, which until 1832 seemed to be almost as laws of Nature: (a) the existence of a *Class* of gentlemen trained for political life, of which both Houses were composed: (b) the habit of *Party government*.

There were but two parties, for the crisis of 1689 and its sequel in 1714 had but two sides. Both parties accepted certain rules of political conduct and could therefore 'play the game' of politics almost like a game at cards. The party which was in the majority

¹ She was his cousin and enemy. It was she (and not Caroline) whom he termed *Cette diablesse*, *Madame la princesse*, and whose "terrible tongue" and other peculiarities Thackeray so unaccountably ascribes to Caroline.

in the Houses held office, while the minority remained in Opposition. It was taken for granted that the majority in Parliament had the confidence of the majority of the thinking part of the nation. If the party in office was outvoted in the Houses it resigned, and the sovereign invited the principal leader of the other side to take office. A system which provided for such a transference of power and salaries without bloodshed and confiscations was felt on the Continent to be truly extraordinary. It was even sometimes the case that political opponents might in private life be personal friends.

The composition and procedure of Parliament remained much the same from 1689 to the Reform Bill of 1832, the two Houses exhibiting persistent anomalies.

The Upper House was supposed to contain all the English peers and, after the Act of Union, sixteen Scottish peers, elected by the body of Scottish peers as their representatives. As the century rolled on the total number of peers grew larger. The King could confer on a Scotch or an Irish nobleman a fresh title (as a peer of Great Britain) which entitled him to sit in his own right. As Ireland had, till 1801, its own Parliament, Irish peers were not entitled to sit in that of Great Britain, although they were able to stand for election to the Commons, and it was the system of George III to bestow an Irish peerage on persons who were to be honoured, perhaps to be followed later by an English dignity. In this way social rank could be bestowed without political importance. Nor did every nobleman choose to exercise his right of sitting in the Upper House. As London became less and less pleasant as a residence, the court duller, sessions longer, and the Commons evidently the more important House, many peers became habitual absentees, leaving the business of politics to those who were accustomed to it.

The House of Commons was, of course, technically a *representative* House, but from the fifteenth century till our own, vast pains have frequently been spent, in one way or another, to ensure its being representative only of particular sections of the nation.

For four centuries (1432 to 1832) all the counties of England and a large number of boroughs were required to send two members apiece, the county members being elected at a meeting of the shire (or county) court held for that purpose. The county electors were all freeholders who must possess as much as forty shillings' worth of land, a sum which, in 1400, signified a manor, in 1800 a hovel. Those who only paid rent, however wealthy they might be, could not vote.

In the boroughs a variety of franchises existed, relics of ancient mediæval conditions. The most usual types were (*a*) towns in which the governing body, probably a Mayor and Corporation, elected the member, and (*b*) towns in which all the *freemen* voted; the freemen might comprise all the male inhabitants (as at Preston) or be as few

as seven, or even two individuals. For from the time of Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell it had been the aim of government to manage the Commons, and as one way of getting acceptable members elected, every opportunity was seized of reducing the electors to a 'manageable' number, particularly by Charles II, who altered many borough charters for that purpose. It is probable that very seldom after 1509 were borough elections truly free. At all times it was easy for a great lord to domineer over a corporation: the Crown, having to act by agents, might find it more difficult, but ministers wielded the powers of the Crown, and by the time of George III a careful system prevailed, some seventy boroughs being managed by particular departments and known as 'the Admiralty boroughs,' 'the Chancellor's boroughs,' etc.

From natural causes a number of boroughs which in ancient times had been busy ports or markets, such as Winchelsea, or Newport in the Isle of Wight, had by the eighteenth century fallen into decay and contained but a handful of poor voters, obedient to the local magnate. The Crown had erected a number of very small places into boroughs. The jealousy of Parliament itself had put an end to the enfranchisement of fresh towns by the Crown, so that newly growing towns of the seventeenth century, *e.g.* Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester, never had laid upon them the burden, or the privilege, as the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries respectively regarded it, of sending members. The north, therefore, sent few members as compared with the south. Scotland sent forty-five members, but Cornwall forty-four.

The decayed towns came to be classed as either *pocket* or *rotten* boroughs. *Pocket* boroughs (Corfe Castle, Old Sarum, etc.) belonged to some landlord who nominated the member. A seat in the House having become a coveted privilege, the power of returning a son or a friend made a pocket borough so much prized that large sums were offered to purchase such a constituency, and owners sometimes sold the representation for one Parliament, much as a house might be let on lease. *Rotten* boroughs were those whose voters, probably the corporation, still held the election in their own hands, but either agreed all together to sell it (the corporation of Oxford being ignobly famous in this way) or else put their votes up to auction singly. Either way large sums of money were spent, and when this wholesale bribery spread to the counties, wealthy families sometimes ruined themselves, out of pride, in contesting a seat with their rivals. Persons more public-spirited used their pocket boroughs to present seats in the House to promising young men. The elder Pitt, the younger Pitt, Fox, Burke, Peel, Gladstone were thus indebted to borough owners.

The total result was that a great number of the seats in the House of Commons were actually bestowed by order of a small number of families, who then dictated the votes of their nominees in Parliament. It therefore was necessary for a Ministry to have the support of

enough of these borough owners to be sure of a block of votes. The Pelhams (Duke of Newcastle), the Russells (Duke of Bedford), the Cavendishes (Duke of Devonshire) held a great number of seats. There were, to be sure, always a small number of independent members, conspicuously those for London, Bristol and Kent, and sometimes Westminster and Yorkshire, and it was partly with a view to these that so much importance was attached to oratory: every Ministry must include, not only dumb voters, but a few good speakers. Speeches were few and sessions short; a seat in Parliament interfered little with either business or amusement and conveyed some personal privileges.¹

The House of Lords, being composed of permanent members, was not subject to such fluctuations as the House of Commons, and, being composed for the most part of the wealthy owners of great estates, was much less amenable to either bribes or threats. The ruling passion there was pride, continually evident in jealousy. It was an insult to the Duke of Bedford if the Duke of Newcastle's or the Marquis of Rockingham's protégés got more places than his, an insult to Lord Temple if the Grenvilles were not treated more deferentially than the Cavendishes, and so on. The Government could, however, always rely upon one solid block of votes. The sixteen representative Scottish peers were elected by the whole Scottish peerage, and it was found possible to manage the election by making the Campbells (Duke of Argyll) arbiters of Scottish appointments, pensions and other prizes, and thereby also managers of the forty-five Scottish members in the Lower House. Two Dukes of Argyll practically ruled Scotland from 1707 to 1761, and no long interval passed before Dundas again drew Scotch patronage into one hand for another generation.

In the Ministry itself it was taken for granted, from the time of Walpole, that a First, or Chief, Minister was necessary (only in the nineteenth century *Prime Minister*), and his most pressing and anxious business was the allotment of offices. These fell under three categories—ministerial posts, those in the royal household, and those of the Irish Establishment.

Among the great political offices—(1) *the Treasury* ranked first. The Prime Minister was always entitled First Lord of the Treasury, though he did not always concern himself with finance. There was a Treasury department, consisting of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and several Junior Lords of the Treasury, mostly appointed for financial ability, none of whom, however, need be peers.

(2) *The Lord Chancellor* was the head of the whole law system of the State, and presided at the sittings of the House of Lords from 'the Woolsack,' token of the ancient parliamentary taxation of the

¹ For parliament as a whole, see A. F. Pollard, *The Evolution of Parliament*.

Edwards, which long since had passed out of the control of Law or Lords. The Chief Justice, the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General were also of great importance at times, in determining the way in which laws were interpreted, advising ministers as to their powers, and drawing up new laws.

(3) More obviously important on the political stage were the *Principal Secretaries of State*. From 1539 there had been two, of equal dignity, each alike dealing with both Home (or Domestic) and Foreign business. Originally the King's secretaries, they had, early in Tudor times, become the most important members of the royal Council. One conducted diplomacy with the *Northern* States of Europe (Low Countries, Germany, Scandinavia, Poland, Russia) and, till 1768, with the American colonies, and the other with the *Southern* (France, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Turkey, etc.), and whichever was the senior dealt with Ireland. By the eighteenth century this geographical division was totally antiquated, so that harmony was necessary if business was to be accomplished. In 1708 an additional Secretary, not of such high dignity, was made for Scotland. In 1768 a fourth Secretary was appointed for the Colonies, but on the secession of the North American colonies the office was abolished by Parliament (1782). The *Secretary at War* ranked below the Principal Secretaries and had not much to do except during a war. But in the great French war his work became so heavy that he was provided (1794) with a colleague, the *Secretary for War*, to whom, until 1854, was confided the care of the Colonies as well. Each of the Secretaries had his subordinates who conducted the actual work of the department; two very important subordinates were the Paymaster-General and the Master-General of Ordnance.

(4) On this system military affairs were awkwardly distributed among a variety of offices, while the army itself remained under the Crown alone so far as the appointment of officers went, until about 1760. Walpole used to grumble because the King would not allow him to appoint colonels and majors for political reasons, though, as he said, he could have 'obliged' a number of deserving supporters in that way. "You want always to have me disoblige all my old soldiers," growled George II; "I will order my army as I think fit, for your scoundrels of the House of Commons you may do as you please." But after the Seven Years' War began he listened to Pitt's recommendations.

(5) The Navy was in this age the more popular force, for the Army still retained the unpopularity due to Cromwell and James II. The Navy possessed from Tudor times a compact government department to itself, the Admiralty. The First Lord was, from 1709 to 1762 (except for one short interval), always an experienced admiral, and beside him was a small Board of other eminent seamen. The Treasurer of the Navy was, however, a political financier of the usual type, and after 1762 the entire Admiralty was for a long while treated

as a financial and patronage department, under the authority of a political First Lord, with dire results.

All the departments were carefully subdivided, as to authority and salaries, among distinguished figure-heads (such as the First Lord or the President of the Council), a number of sinecure holders (such as Tellers of the Exchequer or the Clerk of the Pells), and a few busy men who did the real work (Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sea Lords of the Admiralty) and the proportion observed between these, and the selection of the last group, spelt efficiency or disaster in the actual results. But the public seldom learned who were the individuals responsible for either, and, in any case, on the honesty and good sense of the Prime Minister depended that of the rest: under a Walpole or a Pitt government would be "good," under a Newcastle or a North it instantly became "bad."

It remains to describe that remarkable feature of English parliamentary government—the *Opposition*, which enabled an opposition to government to be harmonised with its stability.

After 1689 those members of both Houses who were out of sympathy with the government and its policy combined into a recognised party which tried, by speeches in Parliament and pamphlets and newspapers outside of it, to hamper the actions of the ministers and, in doing so, to stir up public opinion against them, so as to turn them out of office by making their rule impossible. But this did not imply treason to the monarch or the nation: the leaders of the parliamentary opposition expected to become, some day, ministers of the Crown themselves, and in the meantime loudly announced the superior principles upon which their government would be conducted.

Thrice over, in the course of the eighteenth century, the Opposition had a royal figure-head and could, therefore, enlist the energies of a part of fashionable society. This occurred, first, though on a small scale, in the early part of the reign of George I, when his ill-usage of the Prince and Princess of Wales excluded them from the court and ministerial circle; secondly, in the latter part of George II's reign, when the spiteful Prince of Wales, Frederick, tried to worry his father by encouraging the antagonists of Walpole; and thirdly, in the middle of the reign of George III, when his eldest son repeated on a greater scale the ugly spectacle of spite and vice and political discontent patronised by the King's heir in order to distress the King.

Nationally and politically the most important of these three royal Oppositions was the second, not because Prince Frederick's political followers drove Walpole from office, but because they and their malicious instigator, Bolingbroke, were able, through that little court, to secure influence over the mind of his young son, George III, which prepared public calamity. The Prince of Wales himself was a man of such contemptible character that his support mattered little to any cause. When he died the wits and the populace, which



THE ELECTION—THE POLLING (HOGARTH)
VOTERS TAKING THE OATH.

in those days showed no more decency towards the dead than to the living, summed him up in a mock epitaph :

“ Here lies Fred,
Who was alive and is dead.
Were it his father, I had much rather,
Were it his brother, still better than another,
Were it his sister, no one would have missed her,¹
Had it been the whole generation,
So much the better for the nation,
But as it is only Fred who was alive and is dead,
Why, there’s no more to be said.”

Upon the worthless Fred’s disappearance, his narrow-minded widow discovered it to be her duty to seclude her eldest son among a clique which would court her for the sake of obtaining a hold on him ; and so George was educated on the mere principle of opposition to his grandfather, and was taught to trust nobody but his dictatorial mother and her foolish favourites. The result is writ large in the national humiliations experienced during the first twenty-four years of the reign of George III.

¹ George II, Cumberland and Princess Emily.

XI

THE PROTESTANT ASCENDANCY IN IRELAND (1692-1760)

ON the close of William III's war in Ireland the English Parliament and the protestant Anglo-Irish interest proceeded to secure their own permanent ascendancy.

(1) Ireland retained a complete machinery of government. She had a Lord-Lieutenant, Parliament, ministers, chancellor, judges and bar of lawyers. The Lord-Lieutenant was not obliged to be resident, and when absent in England was represented by two or three Lords Justices, always prominent members of the Anglo-Irish noble families. The number of government officials was now increased and high salaries were awarded, paid by Irish taxes, but the whole system depended on the English Ministry in London, which appointed to the principal posts.

(2) Poynings' Law had long ago (1496) provided that the (English) Privy Council must sanction any legislation before it was mooted in the Irish Parliament; the more exact methods of public business, which developed since Henry VII, had brought this rule (by an Act of Philip and Mary) to signify that the wording as drawn up by the Irish ministers and sanctioned by the English Privy Council could not be altered in the Irish Parliament, which therefore had only power to pass or reject an Act entire. In Ireland, therefore, the Ministry were in practice the masters of the Parliament; they were all members of the leading landed families—*i.e.* Anglo-Irish and Protestant, and their object always was to secure themselves in power and wealth.

(3) The "United Church of England and Ireland" was after 1690 established more firmly by a provision that all tithes must be paid to it: this provided handsome incomes for bishops and other dignitaries, but the parish clergy received stipends so mean that they could hardly subsist save by holding a number of incumbencies, in only one of which, of course, the parson could be resident. The bishops and deans were usually, and the Primate invariably, Englishmen. They were appointed by the Crown, that is, from 1714, by the Prime Minister.

(4) To secure the pre-eminence of the English Church and the safety of Protestants a number of penal laws were enacted (1695-1714). Oaths as to allegiance and religion were imposed on all holders of office and on all lawyers, doctors, schoolmasters and

other professional men. The Test Act was extended to Ireland in 1704 and excluded both romanist and protestant Nonconformists from all offices and the former from all professions. The whole of the Roman-catholic gentry (English or Irish) were thus placed in an inferior position and at the mercy of the much smaller number of Protestants.

In order still further to confine power to the class which the Whigs could trust, a number of social *penal laws* aimed at transferring to it all the land and wealth. No Romanist, henceforth, might purchase land; as to those who still contrived to preserve their property, if one member of a family became a Protestant, this Protestant automatically inherited the whole estate: otherwise, the land must be divided among all the children. Roman-catholics were forbidden to be executors or guardians of minors, or to educate children in their own religion; they might not accept any legacy or gift or possess weapons or horses worth more than five pounds; if anyone did, it was lawful for any Protestant to take them from him on paying him five pounds. Papists might not teach privately or in schools, but if they sent their children abroad for education they were liable to very heavy penalties. The parish priests were to be registered, and successive laws were made to expel bishops, monks and Jesuits, and finally, to transport any priest if discovered. Severe penalties were also imposed on any Protestant marrying a Roman-catholic.

The cruelty of these Acts partially defeated their object. An Act could only be put in force by a plaintiff bringing a case before a magistrate: most of the penal laws, therefore, contained a clause to reward an informer; but the general feeling of all decent persons was against enforcing laws so ferocious, at all events against families connected by blood and marriage with the protestant gentry. Occasionally some brutal speculator might bring a case into court, but as a rule the laws were not acted upon so long as the Roman-catholics avoided obvious defiance. All manner of evasions were countenanced by both sides, even the oaths were sworn to (as if a meaningless form). But the majority of Roman-catholic families necessarily in course of time became poverty-stricken, ignorant and, being excluded from all professions, insignificant in position. If they went abroad they dared not return, so that the pick of them became officers or ministers in foreign countries, and chiefly in those which were the enemies of England: France and Spain.

This penal code was the work of the Irish Parliament: it only remained for the English Parliament to complete the system of commercial tyranny which it had pursued since the Restoration. The mercantile selfishness which had been so marked a feature of puritan rule went to its extreme in dealing with Ireland. Long ago Strafford had thought it necessary to choke the new woollen manufacture in Ireland, to placate English traders. But by the Navigation Act (1663) all trade was discouraged by excluding Irish ships from the privileges of the English marine, among which they had heretofore

been reckoned. Irish cattle and meat were then forbidden to come to England (1665); next, butter, cheese and bacon (1680). The Irish graziers were thus thrown back on sheep-farming, but they were promptly forbidden to export their wool except to England, which did not want it, and when they manufactured it themselves they were forbidden to export cloth (1699). Even on the linen manufacture of Ulster such heavy duties were laid as almost killed the industry (from 1699). Large numbers of presbyterian Ulstermen migrated to America, but found then that the American colonies were not permitted to send their produce to Ireland (1690), nor Ireland to have direct commerce with America at all (1699). The effect of these oppressive laws was a total ruin of manufacturers and flockmasters, many of whom sold their property for what it would fetch and emigrated. Shipbuilding and all the shipping trades were destroyed. The entire population was forced to seek subsistence from the soil or the fisheries. But as there was no market permitted for any surplus food, people only aimed at providing a minimum. Cultivation was poor and famine always threatening, and the native must starve unless he had land to till. Accordingly the strange sight was seen of the poor outbidding each other to rent small holdings even of unfertile land. Competition rents (called *rack-rents*) went up, landlords got as rich as if their land were good and well cultivated, and then hurried away from the miserable sight of starving tenants to seek careers or pleasures in England.

Thus the commercial tyranny of English merchants increased absenteeism among landlords, and as there was little work for government to transact, most offices became sinecures and many of the holders absentees too. Poverty and the hopelessness of any escape from it, desertion of the country by those who drew her revenues, ignorance, and a grateful devotion to the priests who often heroically clung to their charge, smuggling and the violent temper which it encourages, bitter resentment against the tyrannical English and eagerness for alms, these were the dominant features of Irish life in the eighteenth century under the protestant ascendancy.

The want of sympathy between the ruling class in Ireland, on the one hand, and the romanist natives or the Ulster Presbyterians, on the other, led the Irish Parliament to petition Queen Anne to unite Ireland with England as one kingdom. But no English Ministry would, as yet, entertain such an idea, if only because the separate government of Ireland, so long as it was under their own control, enabled them to draw a revenue which they could dispose of as they chose.

The Irish budget provided enormous sums of 'secret service money' and pensions of any amount for royal mistresses and favourites. This abuse, begun by James II, grew to gigantic proportions under the three Georges.

Occasionally some bold agitator in Dublin might give trouble. The first and most famous was Dean Swift, who, to annoy the English

Whigs, promoted a wild agitation against a coinage of some copper money, known as Wood's halfpence (1723), by a series of pamphlets called the *Drapiers' Letters*. The result of Swift's clever abuse was characteristically Irish: the coinage, badly needed in Ireland, was countermanded—a splendid victory for agitation; the dean of St. Patrick's was venerated as a *patriot* by the rabble he so greatly despised; the dispensers of patronage noted him as a man to avoid; and the Irish continued to use bad old coins and clamour for better. The English rulers were not troubled at all.

After 1714 the Whig nobility in England looked with some jealousy upon the great Irish houses. They shortly produced a tighter bond "for the better securing the dependency of Ireland upon the Crown of Great Britain" in the shape of the Act known as the *Sixth of George I* (1719), which declared that the English Parliament had full power to make statutes binding on Ireland. In 1727 Roman-catholics were deprived of the right to vote for Members of Parliament.

The effect of this was—(a) *politically*—to lead the more ambitious of the Anglo-Irish nobility and gentry to seek political and social careers in England, where they became numerous and noticeable under George III, while leaving the less ambitious to batten on the spoils of Ireland.

(b) *Commercially*—that, as legitimate trade was nearly forbidden and agriculture discouraged, the flock-masters, great or small, could not export but by smuggling. As Irish wool was in great demand in France, the French even built swift sailing boats on purpose for this commerce. The innumerable natural harbours of the Irish coasts, and the universal sympathy of the population, whether gentry or peasantry, made smuggling easy and profitable.

"Wool was stored in caves at the mouth of every little river in Cork and Kerry, shipped on board the French vessels, and swiftly borne to Brest and Rochelle. Cargoes of brandy, claret and silk came over in payment on the return journey, with an occasional Irish exile to recruit 'wild geese' for the brigade or the Pretender."¹

The French Government long maintained a famous Irish brigade composed of Irish Jacobites, whose most celebrated triumph was when they charged and broke the English column at Fontenoy (1745). As this was, of course, treason in British subjects they were spoken of by the euphemism of 'the wild geese,' which migrate regularly.

¹ C. G. Walpole, *Kingdom of Ireland*.

XII

WAR AND REBELLION

PELHAM-HARDWICKE MINISTRY (1743-56)

AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION WAR (1743-8)

WALPOLE's great capacity had enabled him to shoulder the burden of government with apparent ease, but the Opposition chiefs who drove him from power were staggered by the discovery of the tremendous task before them, and did not attempt to construct a wholly new Ministry. Pulteney called to mind his self-denying pledge never to accept office, demanded a peerage instead, and retired to the Upper House as Earl of Bath. He was taken aback to find that the public remembered his lessons better than himself, and cried out that "Pulteney had sold himself for a peerage." It was the end of his importance: Walpole, whom the King had with deep gratitude created Earl of Orford, was taking his seat in the Lords at the same time and had the last word with his old enemy very cheerfully: "Here we are, my Lord, two of the most insignificant fellows in England."

Carteret held on for a year and a half, making the placid Wilmington the figure-head, and himself taking charge of foreign policy, intent upon the war (*of the Austrian Succession*) in which England was becoming entangled. But the composition of his Ministry was only a reconstruction of Walpole's, with Hardwicke, Henry Pelham and his brother, the ducal borough owner, in the principal places. When Wilmington died, Carteret, who just then succeeded to the earldom of Granville, found that the King paid more attention to Walpole than to him, and retired. He bequeathed his power and position to Henry Pelham, and for the next twelve years the Pelhams conducted the Ministry as far as they could upon Walpole's plans. Patronage was the Duke of Newcastle's particular field, routine and finance his brother's, but the brains of the Ministry were Lord-Chancellor Hardwicke and Hardwicke's son-in-law and close friend, Admiral Anson.

It was not by Pelham's choice that England was dragged into a continental war. The *Austrian Succession War*, like the Polish Succession War, was waged over a question which had little interest for England, and possibly we might have avoided it but for the unfortunate zeal evinced by Carteret and Pulteney in prosecuting

the commercial war with Spain, and for a treaty made with Austria ten years before, by Walpole, chiefly to please the King.

The Emperor Charles VI (our old ally the Archduke Charles) had no son, and was bent on securing Austria and Bohemia to his daughter, Maria Theresa, who would in any case succeed in Hungary. He hoped that then her husband, Francis, Duke of Lorraine, would be elected Emperor. To obtain his aim, Charles VI drew up a kind of



ENGLISH SHIP OF THE LINE (ABOUT 1750).

will, called his 'Pragmatic Sanction,' and spent many years in negotiating treaties with the other sovereigns of Europe, though old Prince Eugene told him that a strong army would be a better argument than all his heap of parchments. When in 1740 the Emperor died, Maria Theresa discovered the soundness of the old soldier's opinion. Her nearest neighbour, Frederick II of Prussia, paid no attention whatever to the recent Prussian guarantee, but marched troops into Silesia, a wealthy province of her Bohemian (Czecho-Slovak) kingdom, pretending that he had a genealogical claim on part of it. The lineal male claimant of Austria, the Elector of Bavaria (who had

honestly protested against the Pragmatic Sanction), easily obtained his own election as Emperor (Charles VII), and invaded Austria, while every other guarantor held aloof, with the exception of Britain (1743).

The position of Pelham's government was difficult, because Spain (with whom we were at war) was in alliance with France and had maritime help from her against our fleets, and France was also supporting Bavaria and Prussia against Austria. George II, quite willing that Britain should spend men and money upon defending the young Queen of Hungary, executed treaties to secure the safety and neutrality of Hanover, thereby making himself intensely unpopular in England. When Carteret took up the reins of power, he planned a vigorous attack upon France and Spain, made an alliance with Holland, Austria and Saxony, and helped to create public sympathy with the courageous young Queen, but his retirement left Pelham reluctant to continue what he truthfully described as "an illogical war," yet unable to see how honourably to get out of it.

The events of the war were not at first remarkable. George II and Ligonier won a victory at Dettingen (1743); the heroic fight of Fontenoy (1744), where an English contingent fought for Austria, ended in defeat with glory. In North America the French lost Louisbourg, but in India they took Madras. Commodore Anson, sent out in 1740 to raid the Spanish colonies and ships, returned home in 1744 after a voyage round the world in the fashion of Drake, with one ship and a vast treasure which went to London in three waggons amid cheering crowds, and, what was more important, had won the experience and exhibited the qualities of a very great sailor.

The Forty-five

Finally, in 1745, came the event which Walpole had always foretold would arrive with a war, French help enabling Prince Charles Edward to reach Scotland and once more to raise the Stewart banner. The formidable invasion intended by the French Ministry was, indeed, baffled by a storm (1744), and France was too poor to fit out a second fleet equally well, so that *the Forty-five* was merely an insurrection, not, as it might easily have been, a foreign invasion.

It failed, principally because, despite the unpopularity of old George II and the want of good military preparation, the long years of prosperity under Walpole's system had accustomed England to contentment, and 'the young man with the sponge,'¹ however gallant and charming, could offer no solid advantages to counterpoise the prospect of Romanism and financial ruin which would come in with him. Had the chiefs of the Highland clans carried

¹ To wipe away the National Debt and the Bank: see Addison's skilful essay on *Public Credit*.

out their deliberate intentions there would have been no rising, but the personal gifts of the brave young Prince over-persuaded some of them against their better judgment, and the rest would not hinder their neighbours. The incompetence of Cope prolonged the Prince's hopeless quest by giving him a little victory at Prestonpans, after which he led the Highlanders into England, slipping over the moors between the two armies of Wade and Hawley, which were posted to stop him. The Pelham Ministry chose this moment to resign, in order to force the King to sanction William Pitt's admission to the Ministry as Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and having gained their will, resumed office with a new Secretary at War also, Henry Fox.

The invading Scots found no help in England, where, though Nonjurors still survived, Jacobitism did not extend to more than sympathy. But they were not obstructed on their march. It was told that curious persons actually hired coaches to drive them to some point where they might "see the Pretender march by." But in London a sudden panic set in when it was known that the Prince was at Derby, and crowds flocked to the Bank to take out their money—before the Stewarts should close it. But the panic did not touch the well-informed. When George II was advised to go to Hanover for safety, he replied; "Pooh, talk not to me that stuff!" while the managers of the Bank gained time by paying in sixpences, until the news arrived that the Pretender had turned back from Derby—whereupon the crowds went home.

The total absence of English support and the knowledge that a large army was covering London and plenty of reinforcements coming to it from the Continent, made Charles Edward's advisers recognise that they were marching into a death-trap. The troops which they had evaded were behind them, and their annihilation was but a matter of time. They therefore forced the Prince to allow them to return to Scotland, in the hope of at least saving life. That the cause was hopeless was evident. By skilful management the greater part of their host regained Scotland, but the armies of Wade and the Duke of Cumberland were in pursuit, and though the incompetence of General Hawley gave Charles Edward another victory at Falkirk, Cumberland's steady pursuit and the final fight of Culloden ended the Rising. The punishment afterwards inflicted upon the Scottish chiefs and their followers was condemned by both popular and fashionable opinion, apparently holding a fight for the crown as a sort of wager, but Hardwicke, always severe in the administration of justice, held that severity alone would prevent further attempts, and Cumberland might well feel that the generous clemency shown after the '15 had been ill requited.

The Acts for confiscating the estates of rebel leaders provided nevertheless, very carefully and in detail, for all the rights and dues of tenants, employees, debtors and creditors, as well as for the support and education of the rebels' children, and George II showed

a royal reluctance to make any profit himself from the forfeitures, making over to Greenwich Hospital the Derwentwater estates. It was not for the safety of the King, the Constitution, or the public that adventurers should be encouraged to raise rebellions by learning that they would not suffer in any way. When, next year, Anson's brilliant victory off Finisterre destroyed what Atlantic storms had spared of the French navy, both England and France perceived that the Stewart cause was hopeless, and both became anxious to make peace.

The peace of Aix-la-chapelle (1748) did little more, from the English point of view, than restore the old conditions—the *status quo ante bellum*. The conquests made by either side, Louisbourg and Madras respectively, were restored, and the all-important safeguard to England of an evacuation of the Low Countries by the French was secured by permitting this recovery of her advantages in America. So the Austrian Netherlands were cleared of French troops; Dunkirk, a terror to the Thames from the moment of Charles II's sale of it to France, was at last dismantled; and the Barrier Forts were again set up to protect the Dutch and the Flemings, and with them ourselves, from French invasion. But the Spanish claim to a *Right of Search* on English ships, the original cause of the whole contest, was not so much as mentioned, nor were the boundaries of the North American Colonies settled.

On the Continent, however, this treaty inaugurated some changes which were soon to produce startling effects. Louis XV recognised Maria Theresa as sovereign in Austria and Bohemia as well as in Hungary, and her husband now became Emperor (Francis I), the 'Bold Bavarian' having died.¹ Moreover, France had become as ill satisfied with her ally, Prussia, as Austria was with her ally, Britain. Maria Theresa wanted Silesia restored and the British Ministry would not insist upon it. Louis XV's ministers, or rather his favourites, who ruled in turns, were quite willing to help her to its recovery, and it seemed as if war might begin again whenever France had sufficiently recovered from the strain of her recent efforts. As French ministers had no interest in compelling French colonial governors in America and India to give in to English claims, they were allowed to go on warring upon their English rivals, nor did the English Ministry take any steps to enforce peace so far away. Mercantile interests in this country, therefore, found themselves not much the better for the treaty.

Henry Pelham, a 'Walpole in miniature,' kept affairs as quiet as he could. His right-hand man was Henry Fox, a very clever but unscrupulous politician, son of the respected Sir Stephen. But Fox and Newcastle between them used the methods of bribery or 'gratification' more lavishly than Walpole had ever done, and in truth made it a current practice. During Pelham's life the general

¹ See Johnson, *Vanity of Human Wishes*, full of epigrams on famous politicians.

confidence in the Ministry was so firm that he was able to reduce the interest on the National Debt (*i.e.* on the *Consolidated Annuities*, whence *Consols*), to 3 per cent. and from his time till 1888 *the three per cents.* stood as the type and acme of safe investment. He also arranged that England should cease using the antiquated mediaeval reckoning of the year, and follow the practice of other European countries, which had long since adopted the 'Gregorian' calendar. This reform, the principal features of which are the *Leap year* and beginning the year on January 1st, instead of March 25th, had been introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582, but the English would not be so popish as to use it. By 1751 English reckoning was eleven days behind the other countries. To get even, therefore, a jump of eleven days was made in numbering the days of September. The more ignorant supposed that the change cheated them of eleven days' wages, and the cry "Who lost the eleven days?" was for a long time a favourite one with mobs. People used often to date letters by both Old Style and New Style. In the same year the country was relieved of two great patrons of factions and mobs by the death of Bolingbroke and of Frederick Prince of Wales. Walpole had already passed away, in 1745, just before the Rebellion.

When Pelham died in 1754 his brother the Duke of Newcastle thought to step into his shoes, and gave the important secretaryships to insignificant men who would take his orders; one of them was to lead the House of Commons. But in the minds of all, from the latest recruit to the Ministry, William Pitt, to the old King himself, anxiety awoke. "Now I shall have no more peace," grumbled his Majesty, who had known for thirty years that Newcastle was, as he put it, "not fit to be the chamberlain of any petty German prince." "Sir Thomas Robinson lead us!" said Pitt to his experienced colleague Fox, "the Duke might as well send his jack-boot to lead us." Newcastle was an easy man to despise. His trivial talk, clumsy manners, and continual blunders made him a laughing-stock. But he was an indefatigable worker and he did not fill his own coffers with the plunder of the State, two remarkable traits in politicians at that time. His complacent ignorance and conceit, however, made his industry as disastrous as another man's negligence, and the money he scorned to take himself he lavished in a bribery which demoralised the politics and embarrassed the finances of the country. For thirty years this duke had been a busybody in court or Parliament. He had fomented George I's spite against his son, had mismanaged the naval war with Spain, flung away the fruits of victory time after time, and only the courage of a diplomatist, who was cashiered for his success, had at length secured the peace of 1748. No story of Newcastle was too absurd to be credited; famous, and typical, is that which represents a surprised subordinate venturing to point out that a fleet was required to attack Louisbourg, since Cape Breton was an island. "What's that?" cries his Grace, "Cape Breton an island? Show it me on the map! So it is to be sure!

My dear Sir, you always bring us good news. I must go and tell the King Cape Breton is an island." "He always loses half an hour in the morning, which he is running after the rest of the day without being able to overtake it," Wilmington once said. But his vast possessions gave the Duke the control of so large a number of seats in the Commons that, though the King and the ministers despised him equally, he could make his own terms with them. To such a level had the 'glorious constitution' of 1689 become reduced by 1754.

XIII

THE AWAKENING OF CONSCIENCE (1728-1760)

THE great defect in Walpole was his want of concern for any national interests but political stability and material prosperity. George II is still unfairly laughed at for his candid avowal that he 'saw no good in painting and poetry,' his own solace being music, to which his courtiers were stoutly indifferent, but it is curious that so able a man as his great minister should not have perceived that the influence exerted politically by the writers of the Opposition—Swift, Pope, Gay, Pulteney, Bolingbroke—was not derived from their position or means, but from their talents. Walpole paid 'hack writers' in plenty on the ministerial side, but he paid bad ones. The Opposition leaders—Bolingbroke, Pulteney, Chesterfield and Wyndham—were much better patrons of literary men, for they were themselves good judges and good writers. Queen Caroline, to be sure, was genuinely interested in the literature of thought, in philosophy, religion and science; she was a good friend to the astronomer Halley, and when she endorsed the new discovery of inoculation as a means of fighting the plague of small-pox, by having the royal children inoculated, the practice of scientific medicine made a leap forward. But when it came to poetry, she felt more at home in French and left the English poets to the English.

Walpole's contempt for men of the pen misled him into patronising authors so dull as to reflect discredit, and yet countenancing such a man as Gay, who for years drew a pension from the government he was lampooning. The code of honour among fashionable politicians showed him no reason against biting the hand that fed him so long as it could be done safely. The scurrilous attacks, often totally false, and even shameless inversions of fact, which appeared every week in *The Craftsman*, were read very generally, for they were couched in raucous and polished English, and in time they diffused a strong sentiment of ill-will to Walpole and to the sovereigns who maintained his power. George II and Caroline took little more notice than the minister himself. "Pooh!" said the King, when the lovely and conceited Duchess of Queensberry carried a subscription list for Gay's latest satire round the royal drawing-room, "Pooh! I don't mind women's politics." All the same, it was a political error to allow the persuasions of literature to be exerted only on the side of sedition. This gave a good instance of what the idealist must have meant when he averred that if he might

write the ballads of a people, he cared not who should make their laws.

More serious was the blindness of Walpole to the national value of education, morality and religion. He was extremely careful to fill the episcopate with sound Whigs, but was indifferent if, while some bishops made wise and earnest efforts to evangelise their dioceses, others were merely conventional moralists, or habitually absent from their dioceses, living in London. He and aristocratic society as a whole regarded the Church as a department of government for keeping the masses in order.

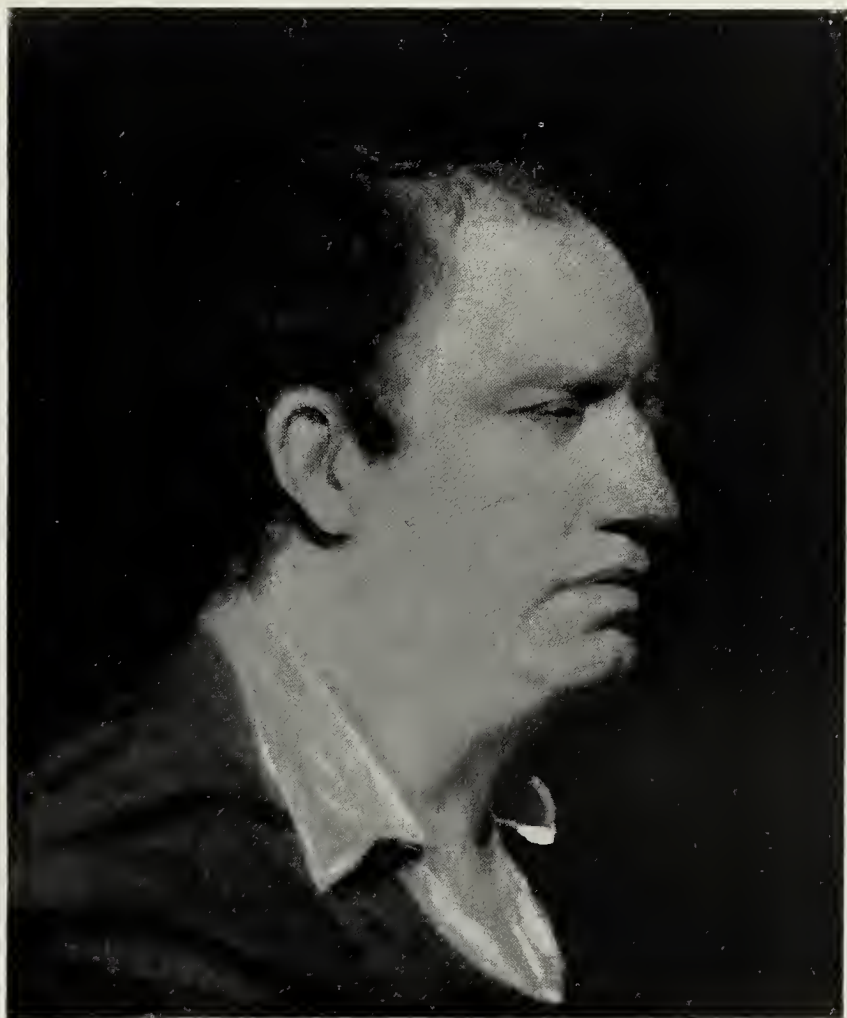
To such a degree had the Whigs carried this system that when one of their favourite bishops, Hoadly of Bangor, who was especially popular with the Nonconformists, provoked a great controversy by a 'rationalising' sermon, Convocation was prevented from holding its meeting, in 1717, lest the other bishops should blame him; and as Walpole took advantage of this never again to summon it during his long Ministry, Convocation came to be regarded as obsolete, nor was it allowed to meet again until 1850, so that corporate action became an impossibility for the Church for over a century.

A well-known instance of Walpole's short-sighted contempt for educational work is his refusal to help the projected college in the West Indies. The colonists of Virginia, Jamaica and the Islands had long struggled to maintain among themselves the Christian faith and the elements of English education, but they were grievously handicapped by the scarcity of clergy and teachers, as few such men cared to emigrate to the colonies. To supply their need by educating colonial-born clergy and scholars, and with a view also to attempting the conversion of the natives, the excellent Dean Berkeley (famous later as a philosopher and bishop) endeavoured for years to get a college founded. His exertions at last procured a vote from the House of Commons and a royal warrant from George II, but the Treasury stubbornly refused to pay out the sum ordered. At last the Bishop of London appealed to Walpole personally to say when they might have the grant. If he were asked as a minister, was the reply, he could only answer that the money would certainly be paid as soon as the public convenience permitted of it; but if he were being asked as a personal friend—he begged the Bishop to advise Dean Berkeley by no means to waste more time waiting in hopes of it. Nor was it ever paid.

Not from the authorities in State or Church was any improvement to come. But the current of spiritual life was still flowing strongly in the nation, though unnoticed, and it gathered power precisely during this callous age. The impulse to personal holiness of life transmitted, in the seventeenth century, by Jeremy Taylor, Baxter and the author of *The Whole Duty of Man* had never died out. Such great teachers had aimed at "training men through worship for practical life," a field almost ignored by the con-

troversial writers from 1689 to 1760, since the great preoccupation of the orthodox Whig school of theologians was still to find out some way of combining or 'comprehending' all English Christians (except the Roman-catholics) in one body, and in order to bring the Church and the Nonconformists into an external unity, men like Hoadly tried to shelve out of notice any characteristic points of Church doctrine or history which might give offence to anybody. The effect was to increase the tendency of the cultivated part of society to be satisfied with a vague minimum of doctrine, worship and practice, and a school of writers became popular, on the Continent as well as in England, which advocated a kind of philosophy called *Deism*. They inculcated the moral principles of Christianity, but tried to base them upon a sort of pseudo-scientific ground, which they called 'natural religion.' This paganising tendency was opposed by two movements of which the first was the appeal to individual thought and conscience made by writers of whom Bishop Butler, William Law and Isaac Watts are the most famous. The second was the tremendous appeal made to the popular conscience by Whitefield and the Wesleys.

William Law was a nonjuring clergyman who, by refusing to take the oath to the Hanoverian King, had cut himself off from parochial work and influence, but became known by his books. A well-to-do man, he practised his principles, which involved giving alms indiscriminately to all who asked him, to a point which exasperated his neighbours, rich or poor, for the parish was filled by a crowd of bad characters. But his famous book, *A Serious Call to the Unconverted* (1728), was a trumpet which aroused the consciences of thousands, much as *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Whole Duty of Man* had done two generations earlier. Composed in the form of an appeal to common-sense and reason, and illustrated by satirical sketches (the popular style of that time), its strange directness made it the most forcible moral influence of that generation. That Christian belief made necessary a life of self-denial and well-doing was Law's teaching, and his lessons, and those of the better-known and unwearied writer, Isaac Watts, and of another author, Doddridge, trained the men who began now to work towards a general improvement, whether on a large or a small scale, in Christian faith and moral life. Eminent among them is General Oglethorpe, who led the way to the first reform of prisons, by an appeal in the Commons, which produced a parliamentary commission. Oglethorpe was also one of the pioneers of missions to the heathen, and he took the main part in the foundation of the colony of Georgia (1732) as a place of refuge for the poor or persecuted. Oglethorpe held that the vast amount of hopeless poverty in England could be relieved only by finding new homes where men could support themselves, and that this colony ought to be established upon moral lines. He had observed the difficulties and failures of the other American colonies and he excluded, by charter, slaves, as well as intoxicating liquor,



DR JOHNSON.

REYNOLDS NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

facing p. 114.

from Georgia. Among his colonists were some parties of Moravian (*Czecho-Slovak*) Protestants, called *Moravian Brothers*, whose earnest piety attracted much sympathy and made them a considerable force, at that time, in the religious thought of all Western Europe.

Among the disciples of William Law, or, rather, of his great book, was a young clergyman, John Wesley, who, while at Oxford with his brother Charles, had formed with a small number of fellow-students a society much like those already seen in London, for study, divine worship and offering practical help to persons in distress. The young men used to visit the prisons and the poor streets, and John Wesley's insistence on regularity and punctuality made the good work of their society so noticeable that the customary nervous terror of 'enthusiasm' began to be felt by their 'dons,' while their fellow-students laughed at them as 'Method-ists'. The Bishop of Oxford, however, stood their friend and prevented interference: these gentlemen were perhaps irregular, he said, but they had done a great deal of good.

The Wesleys had gifts of persuasion and oratory which, together with their intense earnestness, had great effect upon those who heard them. They went out with Oglethorpe to Georgia to be the chaplains of the settlement, but unhappily their insistence upon a church discipline more rigid than had ever been attempted since Commonwealth times caused so much contention that they soon realised their unfitness for the kind of evangelising work called for in the colony, where there were settlers from many districts, accustomed to a variety of habits.

When the two brothers returned to England they began to found societies for religious worship, in London and elsewhere, and the effort of the members to model life upon the teaching of the gospels caused the name of 'evangelical' to be given to them, a term not intended (like *methodist*) to be satirical. In 1739 John Wesley linked many of the societies together as the *United Society*, and from this time he took much pains to form an organisation to keep them together and make sure that they should be permanent. The necessity for this arose from the disastrous condition of Church government. As Convocation might not meet, each diocese was left to its bishop. As bishops were appointed for political reasons, many did not pay as much attention to Church as to State affairs. Each parson did as he thought wise in his own parish, and outside the parish there was hardly any feeling of fellowship. Wesley, therefore, had to make a way to continue the good work he had begun, unless it was to die out with himself.

In worship and in preaching it was his aim, not to appeal to Reason and Wisdom, but to lead men, through worship, and especially through the Sacraments, to realise a closer communion with the Divine. His appeal was to the spiritual sense. The new line which he struck out was that he did not address himself only, or chiefly,

to those who were educated, those who could read and think for themselves, but at least as often to the ignorant and neglected who, by the middle of this century, were a terribly large proportion of the population, and towards whose rescue the parochial system of the Church did not provide a very suitable organisation among either crowded, or very scattered, populations. In order to reach these people, Wesley used the only method possible, that which had been practised from time to time by English clergy since the time of the early missionaries, and Friars, and Lollards. He went to some place where a crowd of poor folk was likely to be found near their homes or their work, and addressed them in simple and stirring language. He did not think that sermons need only be made in churches, though to the more ordinary population he preferred to preach in church, and often did so, for in most cases, at first, the clergy were glad to have their congregations so addressed. But when, here and there, a parson was offended or suspicious, Wesley would preach in a barn, or a factory, or out of doors, and the story is famous of his visit to his father's former parish of Epworth in Axholme, where, as the new rector did not welcome him, he preached standing on his father's tombstone. But such treatment was not his usual experience; speaking generally, his opponents were oftener the churchwardens than the clergy. In London he and his lecturers were several times indebted to the bishop for protection and encouragement, and the Bishop of Bristol trusted him so well as to offer to ordain any whom he recommended. On the other hand, in Exeter the bishop discouraged the movement.

The whole system of the Wesleys was framed as a branch of Church worship, and one of the aims of John Wesley himself was to reunite Dissenters with the Church. But his work spread the societies all over England, and even in Ireland, far beyond the physical powers of one man to control. In order to provide enough missionaries he trained several lay assistants, who seemed to him to have the necessary gifts for addressing the crowd, and several of these were ordained by those bishops who welcomed the new work.

A divergence from the Church began only when, in his later years, John Wesley avowed a claim to possess a special authority, divinely bestowed, and also laid down as a necessary part of the Christian faith, as he taught it, that a positive moment of 'conversion' must be experienced by every soul. Like so many other reformers he felt certain that what in his own experience possessed supreme spiritual importance must have been "the way of the primitive Church," and like them he took it for granted that he could link his own system to "the primitive Church" by ignoring the developments of more than a thousand years which linked the modern with the ancient. Next, the crying need of evangelical workers made him impatient of the steps required by the English Church in ordination, and, convinced that he possessed, as he said, "as much

authority to ordain as any bishop," he began to 'set apart' some of his lay disciples for his American missions, and they administered the Sacraments like regular priests.

In vain did his brother Charles and many of his best friends remonstrate against this step, which, they warned him, meant turning 'Wesleyans' into a body separated from the Church. Intent upon his work, he had sometimes seemed to disregard ordinary justice towards individuals; now it appeared as if, hastily taking a short cut with a good purpose, he had accidentally founded a separatist body of clergy.

Yet at the close of his life he protested himself to be a member of the Church of England, and it was only gradually and after his death that his societies began to keep themselves apart from it. In this way the Wesleyan, or Wesleyan-Methodist, congregations came to form, in spite of their founder's intentions, a new and large body of Nonconformists.

Possibly, had Convocation been allowed to assemble, some plan might have been devised to include the new societies, but the stultifying treatment of the Church, whereby the Whig Ministries thought to conciliate the Nonconformists, was the true cause of the creation of dissenting bodies larger and better organised than any which had arisen before. And it was natural that the organised bodies of Dissenters should flourish, for they met with no official interference in their development and could offer a fine field to the energies of far-sighted laymen.

The activity of the Church, then, was compelled to be local and piecemeal, and this is the main reason for the somewhat exaggerated abuse often poured upon the eighteenth century as if it were a season of total deadness in the Church and Christianity in general. But, though Wesley is far the most famous, as he was the greatest, of the evangelical missionaries, or reformers, he was by no means the only one. Grimshaw of Haworth, in Yorkshire, had begun itinerant preaching before Wesley. A number of remarkable parish priests, besides Bishop Wilson—the apostle, benefactor and reformer of the Isle of Man (*d.* 1755)—were spreading in their own parishes the religious message of the Gospel, and their most striking characteristic, which they share with Law and Wesley, is their aloofness from political contention. This, indeed, was one reason for the contempt with which men of fashion treated them.

In London there was, among others, the independent Whiston, who thought that even royalty and Cabinet rank deserved plain speaking, and addressed them accordingly. In the country there were the saintly Fletcher of Madeley, whose influence and advice were sought far beyond the poor Shropshire rectory and colliery field, which he refused to change for any higher post; the energetic Venn, of Huddersfield and Clapham, Berridge of Everton, Hervey of Bideford, Clayton of Manchester, and the stern Newton of Olney, famous as the mentor of Cowper; while Cowper's poetry, in his

own and succeeding generations, was a widely spreading Christian influence. With Cowper (*d.* 1800) must be named the other hymn-writers—the Wesleys, Toplady (“*Rock of Ages*”), Byrom of Manchester (“*Christians, awake*”), who together provided an almost new form of expression for religious worship—for hymn-singing had nearly died out with the Middle Ages. Byrom was a close friend of William Law, who used to call him his ‘laureate.’ The conviction and teaching of most of these men and of many others like them is epitomised in the words of Byrom—“True religion is the plainest thing in the world. It is not a word, but a thing; not a matter of dispute, but of practice.”

More widely known than these individual evangelists is the name of another early friend of Wesley’s, the great field-preacher, George Whitefield. Like Wesley, a clergyman of the Church of England, he too became a travelling missionary in England, Ireland and North America. After leaving his parish of Savannah (Georgia) to a lay helper, he came to devote his sole attention to preaching, but differed from Wesley and the other churchmen, first, in giving all his powers to stirring mission sermons, rather than to steady teaching, so that he incessantly roamed from crowd to crowd; and secondly, in laying great stress upon the peculiar doctrines of Calvinism, which he practically revived in England. Wesley and he, after a controversy on Calvinism, parted, and Whitefield founded a distinct Nonconformist society, which he was enabled to do by the patronage of the zealous and dictatorial Countess of Huntingdon, who became practically the head, during her lifetime, of the sect of *Calvinistic Methodists*, as distinguished from the Wesleyan Methodists. The ‘revivalist’ methods of both Wesley and Whitefield were distasteful to the cultivated, who thought them perilously like *enthusiasm*, by which they meant *hysteria*. *Enthusiasm* had early in the century incurred additional discredit from the extravagances of a band of ‘French prophets’ who came to this country and used to utter wild diatribes, or claim to ‘work miracles’ on fanciful or fraudulent invalids. When their follies, and sometimes frauds, had been exposed, educated people began to suspect that all zeal covered something suspicious.

Unhappily it was impossible that there should be nearly enough men gifted as revivalist missionaries, or saintly enough to be satisfied with solitary penury in the innumerable poverty-stricken vicarages of England. And where the curate ‘with forty pounds a year’ was obliged to teach private pupils in order to get bread for his family, he had neither time nor means to pay attention to his parishioners, repair his church, and keep a village school going. The portraits of model parish priests which the literature of the age has left to us always assume either that the good parson was so well off that he could relieve everybody’s distress, or else that he was almost as ascetic as an early Franciscan friar. No notice was taken of the efforts and the needs of the parish priest by the State, and

very little by private men of wealth, until towards the close of the century. It was the Government rather than the Church which was responsible for the inadequate nature of education and religion in the eighteenth century.

(ii) THE CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the position of the Church in the Colonies is significant of the dislocated connection, intellectual or practical, between the mother country and those colonies.

New England still exhibited, in the opening of the eighteenth century, that puritan temper which the celebrated pilgrims, in the seventeenth, had carried with them from unsympathetic English counties. Placing religious authority above secular, and regarding the English Church as 'Erastian,' they expected the State and the Law to bow to the admonition of the pastors and to enforce, by secular pains and penalties, the decrees of the religious authorities. In practice a system of puritan congregations was established. Massachusetts, long the leading and typical colony, had always treated Roman-catholics and Quakers as criminals—Quaker methods in the seventeenth century often being noisy—and though, under William III, it was constrained to tolerate all Protestant beliefs, this was corrected by the local assembly, in 1725, when Acts against Episcopalians were passed and sternly enforced. In Connecticut, apparently, the puritan majority persecuted as soon as the great Dutch king was dead, without waiting for legislation.

But in Virginia and Carolina the ecclesiastical conditions were reversed. Here the Church of England was assumed to be existent, for the early colonies of the seventeenth century had been framed after models familiar at home. Each settlement formed a parish, and in each a piece of land was set apart for church, glebe, and parsonage. The efforts of King James I, the Bishop of London, and the Virginia Company had provided also for education, but an onslaught of the Red Indians wiped out the whole and compelled the colony to start afresh at a period when neither king nor bishop could help. The refounding, therefore, reflected the secular temper dominant in puritanised England. The Bishop of London was still treated by the clergy as their natural chief, and till 1714 the bishop would name some colonial clergyman his Commissary. But Bishop Gibson (1723-48) was informed by the ministers at home that 'the jurisdiction lay in the Crown and the Bishop has no right to meddle.' The Crown's ecclesiastical authority (the Commissioners of Trade and the Plantations being the political authority) was entrusted to some commissary, appointed at second or third hand, usually a Scot or a foreigner, barely acquainted with the Prayer-book and the Church. The general policy was, probably,

to prevent any organisation, the Calvinist ministers of New England being forbidden to hold a Synod (1725).

The local control in Virginia rested with the twelve lay vestrymen (or patrons) of each parish. They paid the incumbent's salary in the universal 'money' of that region, tobacco—the annual 16,000 lbs. (less 2,000 in tax) possibly amounting to £80—and they hit on a clever trick to keep the parson in dependence: they never *inducted* him, so that he had no legal possession of church, glebe and parsonage. The last, said the poor clergy, was usually a mere cot with a loft over, never repaired. The vestrymen could reduce their parson to penury and then "cast it up at him that he is his own Brewer, Baker, Butcher, and Cook." The disastrous story of John Wesley in Georgia exhibits the incompatible principles of a 'high' churchman and his colonial flock, even in a stronghold of the episcopal church.

Little wonder that English clergy willing to exile themselves to such miserable conditions were rare, or that recruits for the ministry were very scarce among the colonists. Should there be any, they must journey to England for ordination.

In vain did the Virginian clergy petition that they might have a bishop in America. King and archbishop were willing enough, but the revolutionary Acts of 1689 in Great Britain had left no authority competent to send a bishop to the colonies. The King's power of governing the English Church was paralysed: Anne had learned that the sovereign was obliged to obtain a parliamentary sanction for a gift from her own resources, and after 1714 the wielder of the Crown power was the Prime Minister or the Lord Chancellor, who were so much terrified by the supposition that bishops and clergy might be Tories, and in consequence were so desirous of pleasing the nonconformist interest, that they were adamant against any proposal for improving the efficiency of the Church. At home they could take care that bishops were good Whigs, though they could never entirely gag the University of Oxford. There was, further, the grand legal difficulty that cabinets and parliaments knew only of one pattern of episcopacy. When an English see was vacant, the ministry decided on his successor, informed the sovereign, and sent the King's *congé d'élire* to the chapter of the cathedral. To create a bishop without a territorial see and a chapter was beyond their imagination, while to create such a see in the colonies would stir up controversy.

Every Archbishop endeavoured to extract the necessary political sanction for consecrating a colonial bishop. They knew in what danger of the Law they would stand if they proceeded without that sanction. Sherlock, Bishop of London, 1748–61, convinced George II of "the necessity there was of settling a Bishop in those Plantations"—"but," he adds, "I never could have an opportunity of meeting with the ministers." At last the King personally procured a meeting, which produced no result. The indomitable bishop then

devised, with the royal consent, an appeal to the King in Council, which would automatically necessitate an answer from the cabinet. But he was skilfully prevented from ever presenting it.

The Whig cabinet placed on record their refusal to tolerate episcopacy in the colonies, by the hand of Lord Walpole of Wolterton, brother of the famous Sir Robert, who solemnly informed the bishop :

“ I continue still fully persuaded, that should the episcopal scheme be carried into execution in any shape or in any place in the West Indies, as the unhappy situation of this country and government is at present it would be attended with very disagreeable and dangerous consequences, in this Island as well as in our colonies in America . . . ”¹

Archbishop Secker (1758-68) made fresh endeavours under George III, only to meet with exactly the same obstacles. “ The scheme for Bishops in our colonies,” he writes, “ is in the hands of the King’s Ministers, who have promised to consider it, but have not yet declared their Thoughts concerning it ” (1764).

There were those who lamented this paralysing procedure not only as Churchmen but as statesmen such as Archbishop Drummond of York, whose warning remained, of course, unheeded :—

“ What signify the endeavours of the best friends of that country and consequently of this, except there is alacrity and foresight in those who are to operate whatever is planned ?—I ought not to despair : but I cannot help having many unhappy thoughts upon the neglect of that great Empire which will moulder or decay away with regard to the mother country if it is not properly nourished and supported . . . few persons see the importance of the call that country makes for order and due government ” (May 1765).

¹ Lambeth MSS. I (1751) kindly shown me by Professor Jenkins, and *Historical Collections of the American Colonial Church: Virginia* (1870, Hertford, Conn.).

XIV

FRENCH AND ENGLISH IN AMERICA (1660-1754)

THE imagination of the people of Europe was never able to grasp the vast size of the North American continent. Just as, in Elizabeth's time, the English had assumed that gold and silver would be found in Virginia because they were found in Mexico, and just as the Spaniards had claimed a right to exclude other nations from the entire American coast, so, in the seventeenth century, French and English had no sooner established a few struggling settlements in the temperate regions than they became obsessed by the desire of ousting each other.

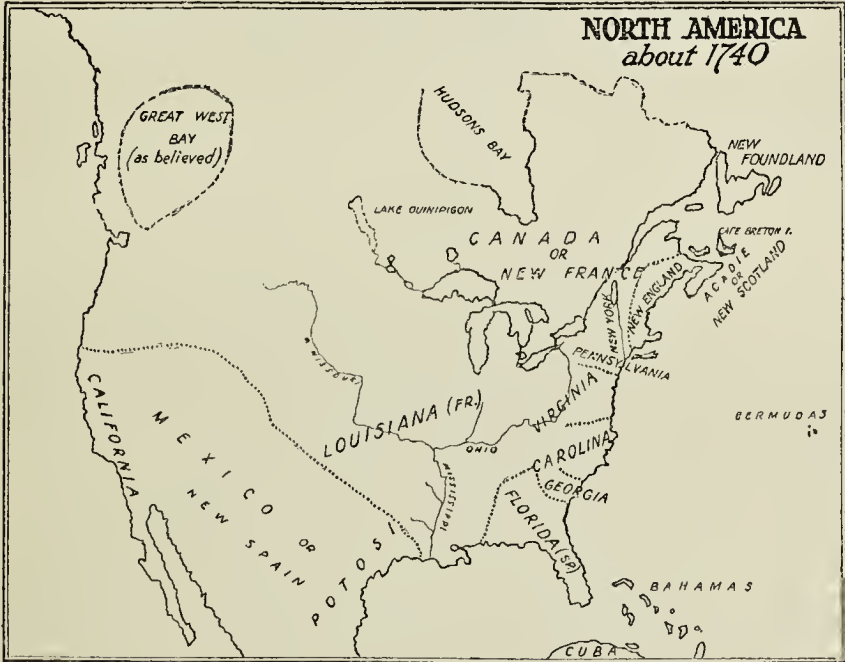
The English settlements were, in 1689, spread thinly along the sea-board, and comprised (1) New England; (2) New York, formerly New Amsterdam; (3) Virginia; (4) Maryland and Carolina, and (5) Pennsylvania. Further north, the French, who had originally been attracted by the fisheries off Newfoundland, had taken possession of the peninsula opposite to New England, called Acadie, where they soon built Port Royal, and had next made settlements upon some commanding heights above the estuary of the St. Lawrence, at Montreal and Quebec.

From the first these French colonies were fostered and ruled from home with a view to their possible importance as naval and military outposts or as pivots for exercising a mastery of the continent. From the harbours of Acadie both the entrance of the St. Lawrence and the coasts of New England could be attacked, and in fact Port Royal became a base for incessant attacks on the English colonies. The English colonies were separated from each other by wide stretches of unoccupied land and sea-water, and their characteristics varied.

(1) NEW ENGLAND. A number of small emigrations had founded the settlements known respectively as New Hampshire, New Jersey, Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. They were implacable foes of the Red Indians and the French, of Roman Catholics and of all worshippers upon patterns other than their own. They were energetic traders and provided grand markets for the pirates who flourished in the West Indies.

(2) NEW YORK, formerly the New Netherlands, a region which extended from Cape Cod to Delaware Bay. It had been founded partly by the traders of the Dutch explorer, Henry Hudson, partly by those of the Dutch West India Company, partly by a Swedish

colony, and by others, but the Netherland government had not treated its colonists well, nor had they contrived to conciliate the Red Men. The outbreak of the first Dutch war of Charles II had begun with the unresisted annexation of the New Netherlands by an English fleet, and Charles presented the province to his brother, after whom it was renamed New York. Curiously enough, its vast spaces supplied new homes to several shipfuls of German Protestants, flying from the devastations of Louis XIV in the Palatinate, and so a sternly anti-French and anti-Romanist re-inforcement kept up the traditions of the early English puritan settlers.



(3) VIRGINIA, the oldest of the English colonies, had been re-settled in the time of James I (see Vol. II., Chap. XXVI), and the name then, as in Elizabethan times, designated the whole middle region of the coast. Lord Delaware was one of the most energetic promoters of the new colony, and after him was named the inlet which formed the northern boundary of the province. Virginia was more closely connected with England than any other of the colonies, and the production of tobacco and sugar made her for a long time the most flourishing and wealthy.

(4) MARYLAND had been founded under Charles I by Lord Baltimore, as a refuge for the persecuted of every form of faith. It was the one colony tolerant of Roman-catholics, and it had never had to render any royal dues. It was named after Queen Henrietta Maria.

(5) THE CAROLINAS were a result of the great activity in commerce and colonising which set in after the Restoration. But the famous Lord Shaftesbury and his friend the philosopher Locke hampered the colony for a brief time by devising for it a 'constitution' of 'checks and balances' so perfect that not an official could act nor any law be administered.

(6) PENNSYLVANIA, the creation of William Penn, the Quaker, was colonised partly by Quakers, driven by persecution out of Britain and New England, partly by German, Dutch and other immigrants, attracted by the liberal principles of Penn. To his father, Admiral Penn, James II had been much beholden, and the son reaped the reward in the marked favour which enabled him to procure not only West Jersey but this vast province with no limits westwards, named after himself, and here he established an unusually tolerant government, both as regarded religion and the Indians. Although Penn's elaborate plan of government worked little better than that of Locke, the province flourished. The peaceable habits of the Quakers and their honest observance of their promises enabled them to maintain good relations with the Indians, of whom some tribes maltreated by the Iroquois lived amicably beside the settlers. The same peaceable principles saved the colonists much blood and treasure during the half-century of war, as they supplied neither soldiers nor taxes to face the French-Canadians, while the fact that New England lay between them and Canada secured their safety.

The English colonies, though much more populous than the French, were so scattered and had so little common feeling that they were at a great disadvantage in case of war. Their most striking characteristic was their antagonism to any control by the Crown. They had to receive governors from London, but the governors were usually paid their salaries by the colonists, who knew perfectly well how to utilise the power of the purse, and who objected above all things, like their ancestors, to taxation. While the French had their eyes ever fixed upon the future, the English paid little attention but to the present.

The different circumstances which had given birth to the various colonies were reflected in their governments. In some, early Crown grants had assigned a kind of suzerainty to some nobleman or company by whom the governor was appointed: in others the Crown appointed. Often the governor did not himself live in America but sent a deputy.

James II, like Louis XIV, had early reached the conviction that North America was too small to contain both French and English, and with a view to driving out the former he intended to unite the different English colonies in one. This idea lay at the root of his injudicious interferences with his subjects in America and of his support of the arbitrary efforts of his nominee, the famous Governor Andros.

In America, as in England, James' grand plans came to grief

with his first clumsy steps, and the colonists hailed with enthusiasm the accession of William and Mary. They accepted the inevitable war with France with equal zeal, for there had never been any true peace, and in 1690 a congress of delegates assembled from all the colonies to arrange how best to attack the French settlements.

The presence of fierce Indian tribes upon the continent complicated inter-colonial war, because both sides wanted to secure themselves against the ferocity of the Redskins, but to turn that ferocity against the other side. The confederation of five Indian tribes known as the Iroquois was usually in alliance with the English, but there were other tribes, themselves afraid of the Iroquois, who readily joined the French. The French governor, Frontenac, was beforehand with the New Englanders and he let loose, in 1689, a war of massacre and flame upon the unfortunate farming villages of the English north-west.

The reply was a raid on Acadie, sent out from Boston and led by a colonist with a genius for partisan warfare, Phipps. But neither could Phipps seize Quebec nor Frontenac New York, and the Peace of Ryswick, to the intense wrath of New England, restored Port Royal to the King of France. There was, however, but the briefest interval of peace, and with the fresh opening of the war under Anne (the Spanish Succession war) more vigorous French efforts were made. Troops, supplies and money came from Paris. For nearly fifty years war filled the forests and mountains with terror, as village after village was wiped out in blood and flame by the savage Indians whom the French governors instigated to harass the English settlements. On the other hand, the British fleet appeared off Acadie and took possession of it a second time for the Crown, nor was it, this time, relinquished when the Peace of Utrecht and the death of Louis XIV ushered in the long spell of peace. By that treaty France yielded to Great Britain the sovereignty over (a) Newfoundland, (b) the vast and wild regions round Hudson's Bay, and (c) Acadie.

The first was chiefly of value for the fisheries, the second for the fur trade carried on by the Hudson's Bay Company, but the third, with its fertile soil and a coast full of harbours, meant, or should have meant, command of the sea on both sides.

The English government guaranteed the unmolested exercise of their religion to the French inhabitants, who were simply required to take the oath of allegiance to their new sovereign, George I. The name of the province was changed to Nova Scotia when parties of Scottish settlers were deported from Britain, and an English garrison and Governor took possession of Port Royal, which was renamed, after Queen Anne, Annapolis.

There ensued thirty years of passive resistance on the part of the French Acadians, treated with total indifference by the distant English government. The population were taught by their priests and by the French Jesuits, who had so skilfully animated the

Indians to massacre the New Englanders, that it was a sin to acknowledge the heretic king and a merit to be useful and loyal to the orthodox King of France. For thirty years the Acadians avoided owning the British sovereign, while under his tolerant sway they were protected in steadily increasing prosperity. During the same time the French were establishing on the neighbouring island of Cape Breton a new naval post at Louisbourg, and were training the Acadians to act as their secret supply and intelligence department, ready for the fresh outbreak of colonial war which they knew would at some time declare itself, whatever the diplomatists of London and Paris might intend.

When, in 1743, England found herself involved in the Austrian Succession war, the news was sent from Paris to the French Governor at Louisbourg, long before it trickled through to the English colonies, and he, being already prepared, acted at once. The solitary British outpost on the isthmus was surrounded, its garrison capitulating on the shrewd condition that they should be sent to Boston; next Annapolis was attacked. Though the fortifications were almost in ruins, the Governor and the troops offered a stout resistance, while Massachusetts and Maine, animated by the men from the isthmus and desperate at the prospect of a renewed French harrying of their coasts, exhausted themselves in supplying the gallant garrison, sent for aid to the English government, and appealed to an English fleet then in their waters to strike a decisive return blow by taking Louisbourg, the condition of which had been accurately described to them.

This feat was actually accomplished by the local levies of New England with the willing naval aid of Commodore Warren; it was a remarkable exploit, and the spirit which accomplished it was that of the Puritans of a hundred years before. The victors fell upon the churches and destroyed all the emblems of the Roman-catholic Church as 'idolatrous.' The French execrated such 'heathen' savagery, and certainly amply revenged it by Indian massacres all along the frontier.

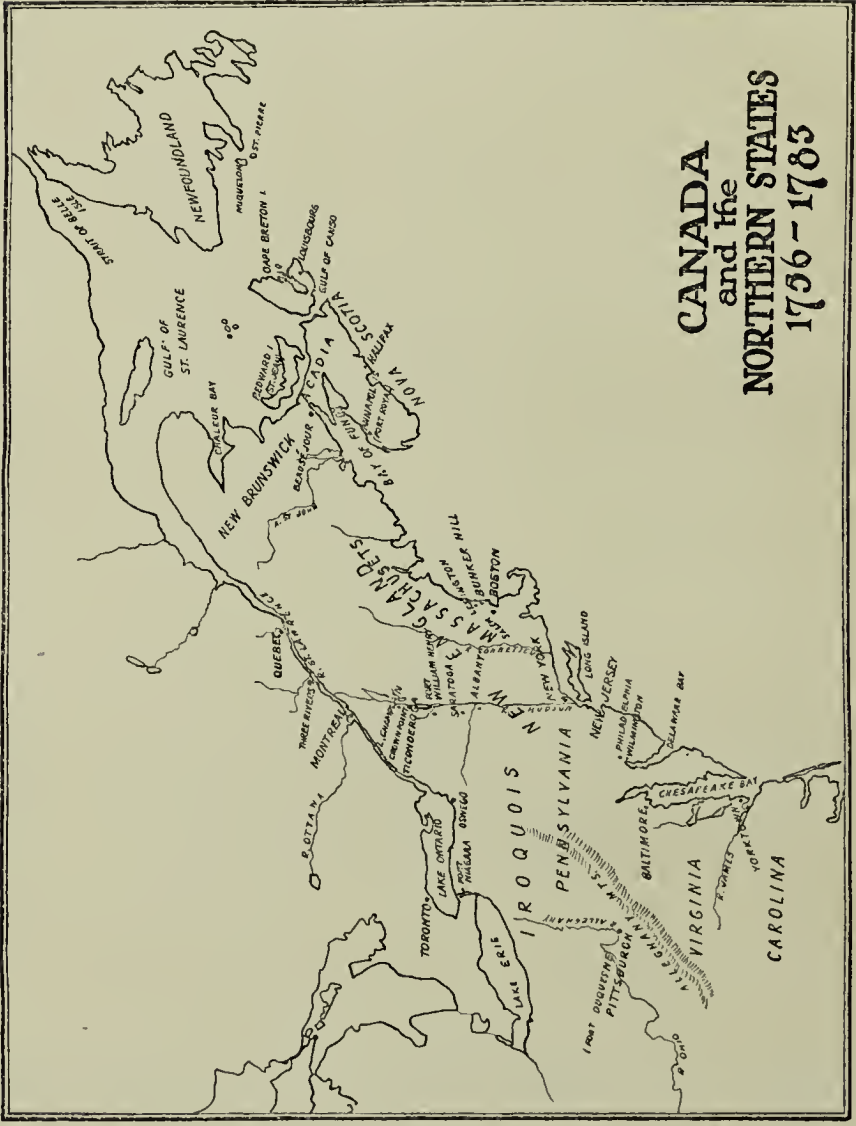
Once more a peace (Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748) restored to the French Crown the conquered harbour of Louisbourg, and New England was naturally enraged, not perceiving why the Cabinet in London should attach more importance to the sovereignty over Belgium than to that over Cape Breton Island. But some amends were made by the founding of Halifax at the head of its magnificent bay; thus the English government, though obliged to hand back to the French their best weapon, at least prepared one for its own hand, to fight it next time.

The treaty of 1748 was, in Europe, only a lull in the long struggle for commercial and colonial supremacy, and in America there was no time of peace at all. Quite regardless of the treaty, the French rulers of Canada began in the very next year to execute a comprehensive campaign, designed to secure for France the entire

control of the continent and drive the English colonists "into the sea."

There was a small and struggling French colony by the mouth of the Mississippi (planted about 1700), named Louisiana. What lay between this melancholy settlement, equally menaced by the Spaniards and pestilence, and the distant capital of French Canada, it had cost a series of gallant French explorers some thirty years to discover, extending the name Louisiana over the Mississippi region. The French had all along been the explorers of the North American interior, for the English settlers were absorbed in their own practical purposes and only went forward when they were obliged, and bit by bit. The French always asserted that their territory embraced the whole of the *basins* of the St. Lawrence, the Lakes and the Mississippi, and that the cession to the English of Acadie only meant the coastal peninsula (Nova Scotia). Between 1700 and 1750, the French established a chain of posts on the most commanding sites by the Great Lakes, and then proceeded to assert possession of the Ohio. They set up a fortress on its head-waters, named Fort Duquesne (1754), and they succeeded in convincing the Indian tribes, including the Iroquois league, that the French King was infinitely the superior of the English. The splendid ways of the French officers, contrasting with the neglect and meanness of the colonials, carried conviction to the minds of the Red Men. But the proceedings of the French alarmed the colonists greatly. The Governor of Virginia sent an envoy, a young Virginian gentleman named George Washington, to inform the soldiers at Fort Duquesne that they could not be allowed to remain upon the Ohio, because it belonged to Virginian territory, but the mission bore little fruit. The English provinces were too jealous of each other to act unanimously. Massachusetts, the most energetic, was nearly ruined by her tremendous exertions over Nova Scotia and Louisbourg, and even when war was seen to be inevitable the congress of delegates which assembled from the various colonies refused to combine in instituting any joint command lest the English government should find in it some excuse for exercising authority. The whole of the opposition to the French invasion was to be left to the British forces or to the spasmodic efforts of each separate province. A fleet under Boscawen and an army under Braddock were indeed despatched from England as speedily as possible, but it was not feasible to give detailed instructions in England, so the admirals and generals had to exercise their own discretion as to the best means of securing the safety of British America.

A serious difficulty was the peninsula of Nova Scotia where the French Roman-catholics had now been left unmolested for full forty years. They had endeavoured to be officially neutral, and they were regarded as neutrals by the English, but while Louisbourg was being besieged by the British forces and the French were attacking Halifax, it was impossible to leave at liberty a large French population who



obediently executed every order of their priests. Some of them had toiled at the works of a French fortress, and among them continually lurked the savage Indians, who carried on the campaign of fire and murder upon the colonists of Halifax. The New Englanders were indignant at the harbouring of French spies and assassins in that coign of vantage, and at length the Governors of Halifax and Massachusetts agreed that the anomaly must end. The inhabitants were told that they must take the oath of allegiance to King George II (in which case they would be dealt with as traitors if they proved false), or else they must evacuate their homes and be taken, with their portable property, on board ship and landed on French territory. The priests still assured the terrified peasants that to take the oath would be a deadly sin, and one even fired his church and the homes of his flock to compel them to migrate into French territory. There followed a melancholy little tragedy which has in modern times received a poetical commemoration. The Acadian population remained passive and took no steps one way or another. The puzzled but determined Governor sent for ships to transport them to French territory, but distance, storms and other hindrances prevented some of the vessels from arriving in the summer season. The English officers collected as well as they could the inhabitants of each village together and caused them to embark in companies. Some of the ships reached Canada, but many were caught by the winter, which closed the St. Lawrence, and were forced to make for whatever havens they could reach. A few even sailed as far as England and thence the poor passengers were sent to France, but most seem to have made for the shores of the more southerly English colonies, where the Acadians were treated charitably. They were, of course, reduced to great poverty by the migration, but many kept sufficiently together to be able to return to their homes again when, after eight years' time, the war at last ended. If any such incident as that described by Longfellow in *Evangeline* really took place, it was in spite of the utmost efforts of the officials to carry out their orders—orders which did not originate in London, but in Boston and Halifax, and which, at any rate, were far more merciful than the system of slaughter and arson which the French priests and officers were then applying by the hands of Red Indians to the settlers on the English coast-line.

XV

THE AGE OF PITT AND THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR

(i) WILLIAM PITT

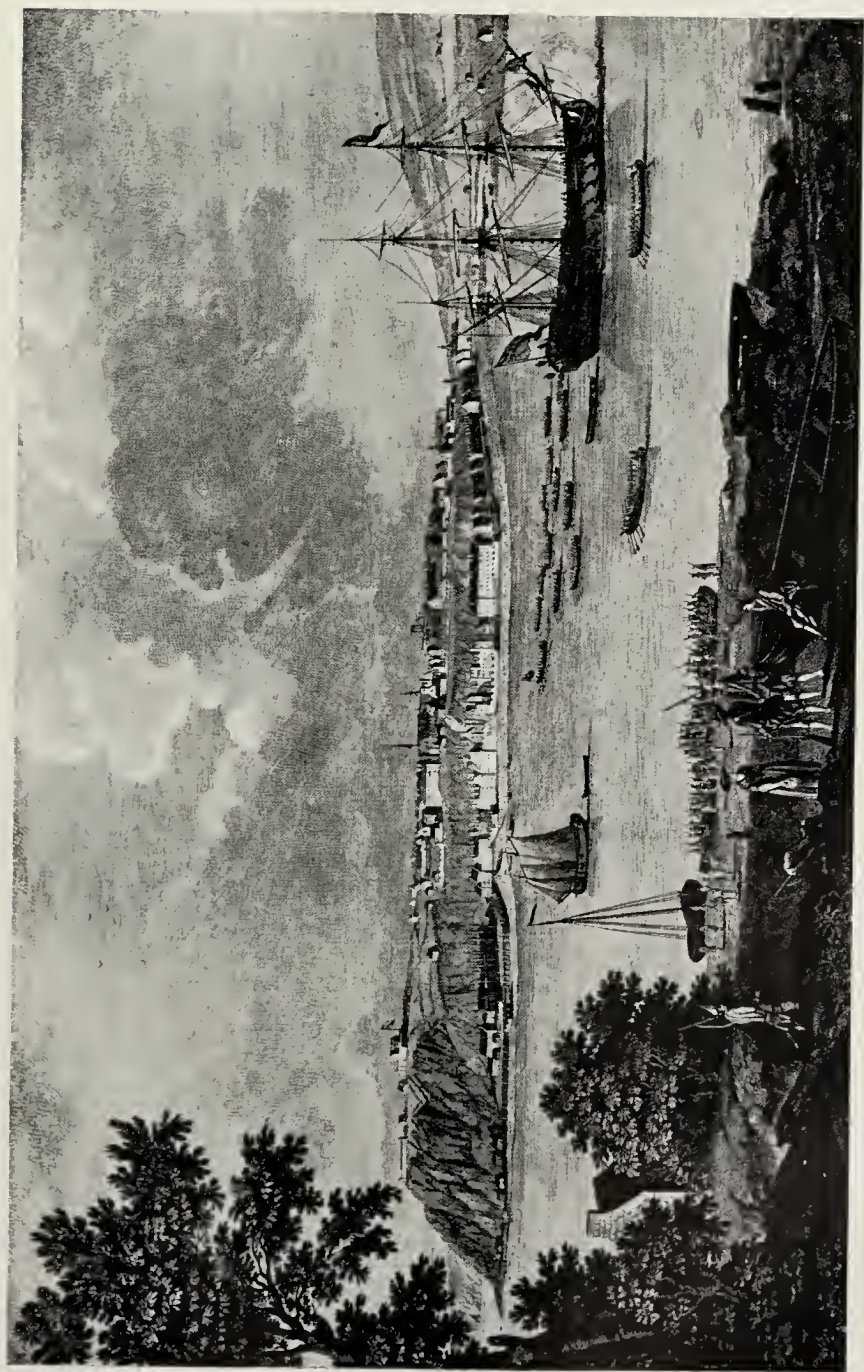
THE admission of Pitt to a minor post in the Ministry in 1746 had been Pelham's concession to public feeling in the middle of the Austrian Succession war, and for eight years the new minister showed himself the finest orator and hardest worker the century had yet seen; but he dutifully subordinated himself to his chief, and expended his splendid talents in a humble office and a humdrum Ministry.

William Pitt was no member of a great governing family, merely a younger grandson of a typical East India 'nabob,' Governor Pitt of Madras, a man well known for his severe and unconventional, but successful, methods in India and for a wonderful precious stone, 'the Pitt diamond,' rumoured to be "as big as a great egg," but which it was said he had once carried concealed in the heel of his shoe.

Governor Pitt had purchased, among other things, a pocket borough, the famous Old Sarum, and for this his grandson was in due course elected a Member of Parliament. Young William Pitt was then a poor man, for the Governor left but a moderate fortune to be divided among a large family, and William's rank in the army, his first profession, was only that of cornet (second lieutenant). His career was not, however, dependent on wealth. From youth he was animated by three strong principles—an intense love of England, an instinctive certainty of his own power to serve her, and an utter disregard of gain or convention compared with power.

He had first to conquer the road to power, and characteristically joined the Opposition, being one of a set of clever young men known among themselves as 'the Patriots,' to others as 'Lord Cobham's cubs'; it included a brilliant lawyer, the "silver-tongued Murray," and the two Grenvilles, Pitt's personal school-friends and afterwards his brothers-in-law. Walpole's low standards and his devotion to peace-at-any-price seemed to Pitt to degrade the national character and he attacked the minister with an extraordinary skill and fierceness which made his name. "We must muzzle this terrible cornet of horse," said Walpole, and deprived him of his commission in the army, thereby stimulating the 'patriot' to devote the whole of his abilities to carving out a parliamentary career.

Later in life, Pitt candidly expressed regret for some of his attacks



QUEBEC FROM POINT LEVY
PRINT PUBLISHED 1761.

on Walpole, and acknowledged that his peace policy had been in the main right. But Pitt was always thorough, and as a supporter of Frederick, Prince of Wales, he had rejoiced the House—where oratory was greatly esteemed—by his sarcastic attacks on the King, the Duke of Cumberland and Sir Robert Walpole. George II, accustomed by this time to every kind of abuse in the papers, had not hitherto been publicly insulted in Parliament, and he never forgave Pitt, who indeed from time to time repeated his offence: "Why should the Elector of Hanover exert his liberality at the expense of Great Britain?" he once asked, not very long before he was called to office.

Pelham assigned to the brilliant orator the office usually most coveted by rising politicians of slender means, that of Paymaster, in which a fortune could be easily accumulated while the work was left to subordinates. But Pitt amazed Society and the politicians by refusing to make use of the standing balances in the Bank for his own account. The fashionable world derided a Quixote who advertised himself in so ascetic a style; but the general public admired the young man who administered a great revenue solely for the good of the nation, and thus saved the taxpayers many thousands of pounds while he remained satisfied with his (quite good) salary. A second remarkable innovation was that he attended to the work of his department himself, not by taking the routine tasks of his subordinates out of their hands, but by improving practically the methods of the office and inspiring the clerks, so that pensioners and half-pay officers no longer had to wait for their delayed allowances, or to fee the agents. In the process of attending to his department Pitt made himself perfectly conversant with the military system of the country. Not least, during the eight years that he held this insignificant position and supported the pedestrian Pelham-Hardwicke ministry, his speeches in the House and his influence on those who came in contact with him held up before thousands of men his own lofty standard of public duty and his pride of country. He became known as a man who loved England and sought to serve her, as a politician with clean hands, as a man who knew how to direct national services and how to fire national spirit, if only his mercantile colleagues would ever permit him to do so. "No man," said one of his subordinates, "ever went into Mr. Pitt's office but he came out a braver man than he went in."

But Pitt's superiors were afraid of him; so much honesty and high principle was inconvenient. When Walpole made war on Spain upon the plan of being gentle with our enemies because he hoped to make peace with them; when Carteret could only provide the navy with sailors by *pressing* mariners out of trading vessels and then ordering the merchant marine to give lower pay, so as not to 'compete' with the Government; when, finally, Newcastle filled up the ranks of the army for North America by clearing the gaols, and hired

Hanoverian troops to defend England, and afterwards, Hessians and other Germans, and even Russians, to defend Hanover, Pitt did not only thunder against such ignominious makeshifts, but urged alternative plans :—higher wages and voluntary enlistment, to provide for a permanent naval establishment and, at the same time, the creation of a system of national military service by training a *militia*—something after the Tudor pattern but more efficient, from which an army might be enlisted. Pitt was singular among English statesmen of his time in being an ardent student of history, finding inspiration and practical lessons in the records of England's splendid Past.

All this was so disturbing to the jealous Hardwicke and the timid Newcastle, who thought to guide the world (even if he choked the British taxpayer) by a pair of purse-strings, that they professed that the King's dislike would not allow them to give Pitt a really important office, and they complacently entered upon the Seven Years' War without having made any sufficient preparation for carrying out the ambitious programme which Hardwicke had not unably designed. They little foresaw how fierce an ordeal for their own incapacities they were preparing at home when they dismissed Pitt (1755), whom Hardwicke patronisingly advised to exercise his abilities by speaking oftener in the House of Commons. For Pitt took the Lord Chancellor at his word.

(ii) THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR AT SEA AND IN EUROPE

The Seven Years' War (1756–63), waged by England and Prussia against France and Austria, was a momentous struggle for all the countries concerned. It is not very aptly named, for the war between England and France had hardly ceased since 1743 and was again active in 1755. The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) had accomplished little for England beyond freeing her from the threat of French troops in Belgium and restoring commerce and travel in Europe. In the far fields which were really at stake, India and North America, war persisted all the while and fortune had favoured the French, who had certainly deserved it.

Newcastle and Hardwicke thought it good policy to 'isolate' the colonial war, like a local disease, and they thought to avoid fighting in Europe by hiring as many troops and purchasing as much influence in Germany as should intimidate France and Prussia from attacking Hanover and would keep the Empress Maria Theresa quiet. For the Empress, though still in 1755 nominally our ally, considered that she had lost Silesia in consequence of the bad advice of English ministers, and naturally felt more resentment than gratitude. She was even devising in her Austrian Netherlands some projects which appeared to threaten English commercial monopolies. It seemed as if England would soon have no ally but Holland, and Holland made a precise stipulation that she would only assist Great

Britain *if she were attacked*; she need not help if Britain were to begin a war.

But the French court and Ministry also wanted to avoid a war in Europe, knowing well enough that their country could not again support such a strain on its resources. They too wanted to confine warlike operations to North America, and to do so they were even ready to sacrifice their position in India. Both nations, however, must use the same ocean routes to America and to India, so that the first issue to settle was, who should control the Atlantic?

The French assumed that they 'ought not' to meet with interference upon the ocean before a formal Declaration of War, and prepared fleets and transports to carry troops to Canada so as to enable the Canadian Governor to annex the Ohio valley and thereby secure the control of all the interior lands behind the English colonies. This need not mean *war*, since they could fairly maintain that those regions were unoccupied. The Newcastle-Hardwicke Government, though they knew that these troops were preparing for that very purpose, were so fearful of putting themselves in the wrong in the eyes of Holland that they dared not ask an explanation (*i.e.* give an ultimatum), but hoped that the mere sight of English fleets on the Atlantic might frighten the French into turning back. They therefore sent Admiral Boscawen to watch Nova Scotia, Hawke to watch Brest, and other commanders to patrol the other commercial sea routes, with very vague orders, so as to leave responsibility to the admirals, who might be disavowed. The result was, that Boscawen (1755) attacked the French fleet off the St. Lawrence, but did not succeed in stopping it, that Hawke, as ineffectively, wore his ships and men almost to pieces in terrible seas (July-December 1755) and that French merchant ships were everywhere seized as prizes: "Vexing your neighbours for a little muck," growled old Lord Granville (Carteret). Hereupon France proclaimed that England had broken the peace, and set about active war with her naval resources intact and her Canadian army well replenished, while Holland, also pointing out that England had begun the war, declined to join her in it.

The differences among the Whig parties, though they produced continual alterations of ministries, had not much affected the nation at large or the conduct of the maritime war after Anson had once got to work at the Admiralty. But when party faction and private jealousy kept able men out of power and incompetent men in, such differences became important, and people outside Parliament, who were well acquainted with court and parliamentary news, through newspapers, clubs, pamphlets and ballads, were roused by the war to a keen excitement over the question of Pitt's admission to office. "All we want," a London alderman informed Newcastle, "is a man to lead us, and depend upon it we will follow." But Newcastle could not bear to let anyone lead, and spent his pains on buying,

with posts and salaries, the support of a few individuals from Pitt's small party—Henry Fox and Murray being the chief.

When ministers actually declared to their purchased House of Commons that their measures for securing the peace of Europe were 'having the desired effect'—though at as much cost to this country as of an active war—it was Pitt who voiced in the House the indignation of the financial and taxpaying world outside. When the news of Braddock's disaster at Fort Duquesne (1755) arrived, people remembered Pitt's warning against sending out "handfuls of men to be served up to Indians like steaks at a chophouse." At last came the crushing news of the loss of Minorca and the disgrace of the English Navy (1756).

Minorca was our base in the Mediterranean; its harbour was all-important if we were to keep a fleet in that sea, Gibraltar being only an outpost which had to be continually supplied. From Minorca English fleets influenced Spain and Italy, repressed the African pirates, kept the route clear for the Levant trade, and, above all, prevented the French Toulon fleet from coming round to Gibraltar and into the Atlantic. A French naval war was bound to begin with an attack upon Minorca, as to which, in fact, ample warning had early reached the Ministry. But it was not till after long delay that an adequate fleet had been dispatched, and even then Newcastle's mode of appointing officers was calculated to bear the same inevitable fruit as Buckingham's had once done. All the officers of the garrison of Port Mahon were just then on furlough in England, and no haste was made to send them back; when at last they went, the Governor of Gibraltar "thought it safer" to detain there the troops sent out, though he knew that the depleted garrison in Minorca sorely required them.

Admiral Byng (son of the victor of Cape Passaro), was prudent to timidity, and some of his captains were too ignorant to understand his signals. After one unsuccessful attempt to drive away the French fleet (in May 1756), Byng thought that he had done enough, and with the approval of all his captains retired to Gibraltar to repair his damages. By the time that this astounding news had reached home, and Anson could send out Hawke with a fresh fleet to make a sterner effort, Port Mahon, though heroically defended by old General Blakeney, had been compelled to surrender.

The storm of rage which swept the country cowed the ministers. Henry Fox considered it dignified to resign: he "had not been consulted on Minorca," he said. Murray insisted on being made Chief Justice and a peer (Lord Mansfield), and thus was no longer a responsible minister; Newcastle contrived to fling all the blame on Byng: "Oh, indeed, he shall be tried immediately, he shall be hanged directly," he assured an indignant deputation from the City. Hardwicke, more shrewd, turned his ear to the universal cry for Mr. Pitt, and brought King and Prime Minister to invite him back to office: "But Mr. Pitt won't come," muttered George II,

nor would he, on Newcastle's terms. For Pitt's ardour carried him away to the point of believing that, with the nation behind him, he ought to control the Ministry entirely, and having got a good duke, Devonshire, to supply a block of voters in the Commons and found enough kinsmen and friends to fill the offices, he refused to negotiate with Newcastle and Hardwicke. They then had to resign, and Pitt and Devonshire took their places, the former the real, the latter the nominal, chief (November 1756).

They held office for five months.

Pitt was now nearly fifty; he had spent twenty years climbing to the post of authority in which the nation, with a unanimity hardly known since 1660, had for years longed to see him. He was prepared to direct the whole energies of people and Government to resolve the humiliating tangle with which Newcastle had fettered England. "I know that I can save this country," he said, "and no one else can."

The political situation of Europe, in 1756, was extremely puzzling. Each government aimed at its peculiar goal, and England could not choose her own path without regard to them.

(a) Austria, our habitual ally against France ever since 1689, was bent upon recovering Silesia from Prussia by any means, and thought France more likely to help than England.

(b) Prussia meant to keep Silcsia and to seize Saxony in the same manner.

(c) Both Austria and Prussia regarded France as the strongest military power, and each hoped to ally with her and induce her to bear the main burden of war, for their profit. But France, discontented that Prussia had reaped the whole benefit of the last war, thought Austria might be a more docile ally.

(d) England, bent on securing North America, wanted to keep the German States neutral and to fight only at sea, while France intended to beat England and Russia at once in Germany.

Of the weaker countries surrounding the main combatants—

(e) Holland was now more afraid of aggression from Prussia than from France and had no longer any interest in helping Great Britain.

(f) Saxony and Poland (these two States being at that time ruled by the same monarch, Augustus III) were equally afraid of Prussia, and Russia, and only sought to remain at peace: while the lesser German States sided according to the interest of their ruling houses, Hanover with Britain, the others with either France or Prussia.

(g) Russia, under the Empress Elizabeth, intended to plunder either Poland or Prussia, whichever was easier: yet Newcastle, considering Russia merely as a well of mercenary troops, actually paid her subsidies to raise some, supposing that this would frighten Prussia into keeping quiet.

The sole point of general agreement was that Prussia was the principal danger to the peace of Europe. And, in fact, the die was cast by Frederick II, who, determined to annex something, as soon

as he learned of the English negotiations with Russia, protected himself by offering to England to "guarantee the neutrality of Germany" himself, in return for a treaty and a subsidy (Treaty of Westminster, 1756). The English Ministry, therefore, had made two inconsistent agreements and paid two subsidies to array Russian and Prussian armies against each other.

As soon as the Empress Maria Theresa, who knew Frederick too well to be duped by his sudden zeal for 'neutrality,' learned of the Treaty of Westminster, she signed a treaty with Louis XV, for mutual defence against England and Prussia, and another with Elizabeth of Russia, also against Prussia. Then Frederick suddenly marched upon defenceless Saxony, announcing, untruly, that the Saxon sovereign had secretly allied against him with Russia—and so the continental war was begun, England dragged in by Prussia, France by Austria.

Pitt, on coming into office, endorsed gladly the change of alliance from Austria to Prussia, because, looking on war with France as inevitable, he preferred a vigorous ally to a decrepit one, and he saw how French armies might be drawn into Germany instead of sailing to Canada. But he did not mean to let those armies crush our ally. At first he thought that the various German troops for which Newcastle had paid so many subsidies might face the French on the Rhine, or else that a series of attacks on the French Atlantic harbours would even hold French armies back from invading Germany at all.

He therefore completed the arrangements already begun for the subsidised army which was to defend Hanover¹, while he set all the naval resources of this country hard at work, to succour India, to carry reinforcements to our commanders in America, and above all to stop any more French fleets from sailing for Canada. But the loss of Minorca had made it impossible to prevent the Toulon fleet from coming out into the Atlantic, and the situation which had endangered William III existed again: the Brest and Toulon fleets might join and crush an English fleet between them, or they might go by different routes to the west and trail English fleets ineffectually after them, or they might decoy the English on to one route, and then slip away from them on another. We had not enough ships and men to patrol the whole Atlantic, even if the stormy seas would allow of it, and we could spare none to exert influence in the Mediterranean on Spain or Italy. But Pitt was not the mere firebrand Newcastle thought him; by unusually frank and friendly explanations through our ambassadors he convinced the courts of Spain, Naples and Sardinia² that they had nothing to fear from us, and they accordingly remained neutral—Spain till 1761, the others during the entire war.

At home, the fury caused by Byng's fiasco at Minorca was still

¹ See the mocking ballad quoted by Macaulay in his *Essay on Pitt*—"No more they make a fiddle faddle," etc.

² The Duke of Savoy was titular King of Sardinia.

raging. The court-martial could not but find him guilty of culpable negligence, and the penalty for this, by a recent code of naval law, was death. There had been too many instances of slackness and disobedience in the naval wars of this century (from 1690), and Anson had for years been endeavouring to get rid of the fine-gentleman captains and rule-of-thumb admirals who had so often thrown away victory by their slowness, insubordination, or even sheer cowardice. From the last vice in certain captains both Benbow and Hawke had suffered grievous disaster, and the officers of the Navy had been flatly told that punishments would be made real.

Byng's fate, therefore, was not a purely personal question. Pitt wanted the King to exercise his prerogative of mercy and save the life of the wretched commander, who had doubtless *thought* himself to be 'acting for the best,' and the House of Commons, as he told the King, agreed with him. But for once George II and the people thought alike against Pitt. "Sir," replied his Majesty, "*you* have taught me to look for the sense of my subjects in another place than in the House of Commons," and Byng was shot. Foreign courts and admirals cried out with indignation, and the King has been charged with cruelty. But no subsequent admiral ever disgraced the Navy by such conduct as Byng's.

In the five months of this, his first responsible Ministry, Pitt carried his famous Militia Bill in the Commons, but Newcastle got it thrown out in the Lords. Next, following Wade's plan more thoroughly, Pitt raised Highland regiments from among the clans so lately rebellious, in spite of Hardwicke's disapproval. Ship-yards were set at work building craft, especially the fast frigates, 'the eyes of the fleet,' so vehemently demanded by every admiral from 1625 to 1805, while recruits suddenly came pouring in, enthusiastic at the very name of Pitt (just as in 1914 they responded to the call of Kitchener). "I want," he had said, "to call the country out of that enervate state that [the rumour of] 20,000 men from France could shake it." So much he had already done.

In return, Newcastle's voters blocked his plans in the Commons, Hardwicke calumniated him to the King (for Pitt had bestowed the Solicitorship, the gate of the legal career, on the public-spirited Judge Pratt, instead of on Hardwicke's son), and the honest but dull Duke of Cumberland actually refused, at first, to command the Hanover army (a necessity if the foreign officers were to be controlled) while Pitt was Secretary for War; because he really supposed, from Pitt's past speeches, that he would refuse money and supplies to the German army. Hereupon Devonshire and Pitt were suddenly dismissed by the King, who expended his own private funds on his son's army, and Newcastle bustled happily about to fill up all the places again (April 1757). After eleven weeks, however, he and Hardwicke could not find enough men of straw to work the Ministry, so terrifying was the task before them.

During those alarming weeks there was no Ministry, though

Cumberland's army was actively engaged on the Flanders front; but almost every important town of England and Scotland was demonstrating its support of Pitt by offering him 'the freedom of the city'¹ and Hardwicke recognised that Pitt was after all a necessity and suggested a Coalition Ministry. The two great opposites, Newcastle and Pitt, were persuaded to work together on the basis that the Duke was to *give* everything and Pitt to *direct* everything. Moreover the Tory country gentlemen announced their support of Pitt.

The strange ministerial combination was just formed (June 1757) when the dreadful tidings reached this country of the horrible 'Black Hole of Calcutta' and the Company's loss of that important station; next, that a crushing defeat had fallen on Frederick II; and finally, and worst of all, that the Duke of Cumberland had not only been defeated and out-manceuvred, but had capitulated ignominiously, by the Convention of Closterseven, which gave the French an open road into Hanover.

The previous victories of Frederick II had raised the greatest enthusiasm in England, where that cynical atheist was spoken of as "the Protestant hero," insomuch that '*The King of Prussia*' became a favourite sign on inns. His fortune henceforth varied, victory and defeat alternating, but under Pitt England soon became less dependent on the victories of an ally. The *Militia Act* (1757) provided for a training, in every county, of successive bodies of men who were only to be called up (*embodied*) for active service if a likelihood of invasion appeared. Many old-fashioned Whigs, as well as Tories, denounced this as an engine of tyranny; to train the mass of the people in arms, wailed Newcastle, would make us a *military* country: why could not Pitt keep all the regular troops at home? What did Canada or Frederick II matter? Hardwicke actually advised the Lords Lieutenant—who were now once more ordered to perform the task for which the Tudors had created them—to ignore the Act, and the agitation of all these politicians led to riots in seven counties. But in time the country squires, many of them Tories who had long kept aloof from politics, understood the great minister's intentions and sprang to arms. With them came the yeomen and peasantry; riots ceased, men hastened to be trained, and the militia were soon able to take turns in manning the coast defences. But the intending invaders never reached the new defenders. Choiseul, indeed, was not unworthy of his antagonist Pitt; he believed that a bold stroke at the heart of England, even if the French troops and ships were destroyed in the end, would be worth while for the sake of the shock it would inflict on British confidence and reputation, and he retained spies in the southern counties who gave him plans of the roads to London and news of the dispositions of regiments. But though Choiseul mustered an army on the French coast, he was still in the predicament of Philip of Spain long before: the Straits of Dover lay in the way, and the

¹ "For some weeks it rained gold boxes," scoffed Horace Walpole.

veterans Hawke and Boscawen, or the younger commanders, Howe, Keppel and Rodney, always barred the sea with their tireless fleets.

The English naval system known as the '*blockade*' of the French ports (Brest and Rochefort on the west, Toulon in the Mediterranean) meant a comprehensive watch of the enemy coasts and of the seas around. Our fleets had their *base* at Plymouth, or in Torbay, or the Downs. They must shift their sails with every change of wind to keep at sea within sight of the deep-sea harbours of France, and they must also patrol the routes to Brest or Rochefort from the West Indies, Canada and the Mediterranean. As the area of water visible from the masthead of a ship was not extensive, watch could only be maintained by a number of fast frigates able to signal or to fly into Torbay with news. Wooden ships at sea became every day less able to sail swiftly; the winds which blew English vessels back to harbour would bring French vessels out, hence the task of the English Navy was twice as hard as that of the French, while the latter had also the advantage of possessing more scientific systems of signalling and naval instruction.

In both military and naval science the first and leading strategical books were written by French officers; Frederick of Prussia studied the one, and English admirals, who never made public their own principles, were not above utilising the other in training their officers.

The Seven Years' War ranks as the one English war, since Henry V, which was conducted by a minister who understood his task, and it is regarded as the classical model of the manner in which this country should make war. Pitt, in youth a soldier, knew from the first how little 'chance' there is in war and never treated it as a gambling game. Secret plans, exact preparation and swift execution were the principles of his system. He perceived great ends at which Britain might reasonably grasp and designed his blows strictly towards those ends. He endeavoured to give his admirals and generals the forces they asked for and kept up a stream of reinforcements. Above all, he understood, what William III and Marlborough had already attempted, the art of combining together the two great forces of Army and Navy in 'mixed' expeditions.

In a sense, the whole war was a 'mixed' combination, Frederick II's part being primarily that of a sword, flashing now hither and now thither, defended in the rear by a secondary army of English-paid Germans, at first commanded by the unhappy Cumberland, then by the able and resolute Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick. But on the ocean English fleets both supplied Ferdinand and, by attacking the French coast, drew away such a great proportion of French troops as prevented Louis XV's marshals from ever being in superior strength in Germany.

The French were distracted by the rapidity of Pitt's attacks—on Canada, on West Africa, on the Rhine, and on the French

military ports, and by the activity of so many fleets, present alike off Toulon, Gibraltar, Brittany, Emden and Newfoundland, and sweeping the Bay of Biscay, the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean. Only into the Baltic Pitt refused to send English ships; Frederick ought to be able to stem a Russian invasion of Prussia by himself.

In other words, France, instead of profiting, as usual, from holding 'interior lines' found herself the centre of a threatening circle, and, with more than double the population of Great Britain and far greater armies afoot, was being worried to death by the vigour of the smaller country. It was no little weight in the balance that England had had three generations of magnificent finance (under Montague, Walpole and Pelham), while the capital and resources of France had been steadily drained during the same period.

The first token of the falling scale of France was the gradual weakening in her Navy. Storms, indeed, might sometimes frustrate English fleets, or sickness hold them back, but fresh fleets were regularly sent out, while the French naval offensive, which opened so splendidly with Minorca, could not be sustained, and Byng's disgrace seemed in the eyes of this nation to have been wiped out when, in 1758, Admiral Osborne, off Gibraltar, despatched his brilliant second, Saunders, home with the famous Marquis Duquesne a captive on board, and a renowned French flagship following as a prize behind him.

To take the naval attacks first. The raids on the French ports were always made by a joint naval and military attack. The men-of-war landed the troops and then attacked from the sea, while the troops attacked from the land. The object was either to destroy enemy ships and stores, or to seize and hold a valuable post which might serve, perhaps as a gate for future raids, perhaps as a pawn to exchange for Minorca afterwards; but the raids were seldom really successful, owing to misconduct among the military men.

In 1756-7 Howe stopped a French attack on the Channel Isles and incessantly patrolled the mouth of the Channel.

Hawke reached Rochefort (1757), but the military officers, Mordaunt and Conway, refused to attack. In 1758 Howe made a dash at St. Malo, but here also the generals, Marlborough and Sackville, thought it 'not safe' to fight. In a second expedition Howe succeeded in destroying the new naval works at Cherbourg.

1759 was the decisive year. Choiseul had his army of invasion ready. Flat-bottomed boats were collecting at Havre, and the Brest and Toulon fleets once more planned to meet and sweep the Channel clear. Boscawen, however, was watching Toulon and Hawke blockading Brest. The Toulon fleet got out in August, while the English ships were watering off Spain, but was caught up by Boscawen and destroyed in a running fight which ended in the neutral Portuguese waters of Lagos Bay. (Afterwards our government apologised profusely and paid Portugal an indemnity.) Already

Rodney had attacked Havre and destroyed or scared away most of the flotilla of transports. Chief of all, Hawke, blown away from Brest by furious storms, plucked from seeming disaster the splendid victory of Quiberon. For Conflans, the brilliant French admiral, had hastened out of Brest to fetch the troops from Quiberon Bay to England. But off Brest he found a squadron of little ships patrolling the coast. Chasing them away, he was decoyed by Commodore Duff right into the jaws of Hawke, who was returning already to the charge, guessing what Conflans would be at. Conflans then deliberately led the way to the dangerous bay of Quiberon, expecting with the aid of the gale to drive the English on to the rocks to leeward. But Hawke, trusting to the splendid seamanship of the sailing masters, dashed in among the French rear between the reefs and took or sunk ship after ship till the early fall of night stopped the fighting (November 20). Next morning, such French ships as had escaped fled up the river mouths, most of them being wrecked in the attempt, while only two English ships had come to grief among the rocks of that terrible coast.¹ Hawke and Boscawen and English seamanship had destroyed, for that generation, the possibility of a French raid on Great Britain. For another year either Hawke or Howe continued to terrorise the French coast, keeping Louis' troops anxiously on their own shores, from Brittany to Bordeaux, instead of attacking Frederick II in Germany.

The triumphs of these famous admirals, as of Saunders in the *St. Lawrence*, were partly due to the wonders wrought in the English naval dockyards under Anson, partly to the excellent conditions of pay and discipline which Anson and Pitt made habitual, but yet more to that intrepid acquaintance with the ocean which admirals and officers had practised for a lifetime, and the courage of their hardy crews who month after month kept up their desperate watch through storm and cold.

Keppel was one of Anson's younger admirals, and to his daring and skill was due the conquest (1758) by a quite small expedition of the French West African colonies, Gorée and Senegal, which had been French from the sixteenth century. The expedition was suggested to Pitt by a Quaker merchant who declared that it could be accomplished without bloodshed, as, thanks to Keppel, it actually was.

This useful conquest meant (1) that France lost the slave-trade of those parts, which was acquired by Bristol, Liverpool and Plymouth, and (2) that the French were deprived of a base necessary to their ships, whether for their East Indian voyages or for raiding English commerce in the South Atlantic. Henceforth England could exploit 'the Guinea Coast' herself, and the handsome gold coins minted under George III illustrate the triumph.

¹ See Newbolt, *The Island Race*, Hawke.

(iii) THE CONQUEST OF CANADA

The dominant purpose in Pitt's war policy was to conquer Canada from the French. To accomplish it, he despatched an invading fleet and an army each year from 1757 till 1760, while every expedition hurled at the French coast or at French African or Indian posts was valued, not only for the immediate result obtained at Cherbourg, or Belleisle, or Gorée, but for the check so dealt to French reinforcements for Canada.

The seat of the Canadian government was Montreal. The approaches to Montreal from Europe were guarded by the fortress-town of Quebec, half-way to the sea, and, at the entrance to the Atlantic, by the fortress and naval harbour of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island.

On the continental side the defences of Montreal, which were also French gates to the English colonies, were Fort Niagara, controlling the waterway across Lake Ontario, and two forts, Crown Point and Ticonderoga, controlling the natural route between Canada and New York along the valley of Lake Champlain.

In 1757 Admiral Holburne was despatched to Louisbourg, which was also to be attacked from New England, on land, by Loudoun, one of those correct old soldiers whom George II so steadily refused to disoblige. This project came to nothing, partly because terrific storms nearly battered the fleet to pieces, and partly because both Loudoun and the French Governor of Louisbourg were possessed of stupendous prudence.

Next year Pitt named the commanders, Boscawen and Hardy for the fleet, Amherst, seconded by Wolfe, for the army which the fleet was to convey to Cape Breton Island. The attack on the Champlain valley was entrusted to the old and cautious Abercromby, with young Lord Howe as his second. Once having recognised Pitt as inevitable, the King was able to recognise his good judgment. Typical is the classical anecdote, how a courtier sought to please him by saying that Wolfe was certainly mad, only to be snubbed with "I wish then he would bite some of my other generals."

The assault on Louisbourg was victorious, thanks to Boscawen's sleepless vigilance, Amherst's persistence and Wolfe's splendid daring. But the continental campaign failed. Montcalm marched from Montreal to defend Ticonderoga; the gallant and beloved Howe was killed at the first onset and Abercromby 'prudently' retreated.

In 1759 another and still finer effort was made. Amherst took command of the inland campaign, Wolfe of an invasion up the St. Lawrence. Amherst, marching his forces in two divisions, seized Fort Niagara, so as to control Lake Ontario and break the French connection with the Ohio-Mississippi, and also cleared the Champlain valley, driving the French from Ticonderoga and Crown Point (July 1759). There he paused, probably expecting tidings of Wolfe.

But the two were separated by hundreds of miles of mountain, forest and lake, trackless to the white man, though familiar enough to the Indians in the French interest.

Admiral Saunders, in the meantime, had carried Wolfe and a small picked army into the St. Lawrence, the unknown channels of which he had ordered to be sounded as far as possible by a seaman afterwards to become famous, James Cook. A French Canadian pilot was taken on each transport, but as, naturally enough, they were unwilling to pilot the English, the expert mariner who was master of the leading ship, 'old Killick,' would not trust his Frenchman, but proceeded to con the vessel himself—"by the ripple and colour of the water (writes a captain) distinguishing the places where there were ledges of rock, to me invisible, from banks of sand, mud or gravel." He was heard muttering—"I'll convince you that an Englishman shall go where a Frenchman dare not show his nose . . . a thousand places in the Thames fifty times more hazardous than this; I am ashamed that Englishmen should make such a rout about it.'"¹

Montcalm had reckoned the dangers of the estuary half of his defence, for the fortifications of Quebec were in a ruinous condition. But he foiled his foes for two months whilst Wolfe was endeavouring to reach the city from east and north. The approach of autumn storms at last showed that the ships should return to the sea, and Wolfe, with Saunders' consent, resolved on the final forlorn hope of sealing the cliffs above Quebec and delivering pitched battle on the Plains of Abraham, close to the city. Their camps were now established on the Isle d'Orleans and upon the bluffs on the right bank of the St. Lawrence. With great skill general and admiral misled the enemy as to their movements, then Captain Holmes conveyed a picked force to the cove selected by Wolfe. The soldiers made their silent climb in the dark; Montcalm drew out to meet them: there was a brief, fierce struggle, which cost the lives of both of the gallant generals, and the English victory was secured (September 13, 1759).

On the death of Wolfe the command devolved on Townshend, something of a carpet soldier, who returned home with Saunders' fleet, leaving Brigadier Murray with all the fit troops to repair and hold Quebec. Admiral Saunders, hastening homeward to take his part in the blockade of France, left Colville's squadron at Halifax to be ready for the fight which certainly would come in spring; but from the ships, as well as from Amherst, Murray was immediately cut off by the remorseless Canadian winter, which none of the English were acquainted with. So fearful were the sufferings of the starving men camped in the ruins that less than half survived fit for duty.

On the first approach of spring (1760) the French duly appeared on the Heights of Abraham, hoping to overwhelm the feeble garrison before reinforcements could reach it from either side. Fortunately

¹ See *Select Naval Documents*, pp. 137-8, for vivid detail.

the French General formed a deliberate siege and Murray was still holding out when, in May, the ice began to break up in the St. Lawrence.

Pitt, Amherst, Colville and the capable Governor of Halifax, Lawrence, had all done their best to expedite relief expeditions, and so, on their part, had the French. The squadron despatched from England by Pitt was the earliest to reach the mouth of the estuary, and the first frigate which found itself in the waterway hastened on alone to Quebec basin.

Both armies stood watching in suspense. Was she French or English? "It was not till she was well in the Basin that the British flag fluttered out to decide the question. A roar of triumph went up from the shattered ramparts, for everyone knew the fate of Canada was decided too."¹

The rest of the little squadron followed and promptly sank the French flotilla and cannonaded the French lines while the English transports were unloading in the harbour.

Only a few days after a French squadron, which had skilfully slipped through the blockade, arrived with its men and stores off the mouth of the St. Lawrence, there to meet with Colville and instant destruction.

The French army had hurriedly retreated to Montreal, but its doom was sealed. Amherst was now advancing from one side and Murray from the other. Both carried their men by water, Amherst's flotilla crossing Lake Ontario and actually shooting the rapids of the St. Lawrence above Montreal. Murray had the naval vessels. The English forces were now so overwhelming that the French-Canadian population ceased to resist, and there was no alternative before Governor Vaudreuil but the complete surrender of Montreal and all Canada (September 1760).

Although a long Indian resistance followed, known from the valorous chief who conducted it as *Pontiac's conspiracy*,² there was henceforth no real doubt as to the destiny of Canada and the security of the older English colonies.

From 1759 to 1762 the war was prosecuted in the West Indies, where Rodney, Pocock and Keppel, with military forces attached, conquered Guadeloupe, Dominica, Tobago, Martinique and, on the entry of Spain into the war, Havana, the capital of Cuba. In the East Indies, Manila, capital of the Philippine Islands, was taken also (1762). Pitt was then no longer minister, but it was his plans which were carried out.

¹ Corbett, *Seven Years' War*, Vol. I, chap. XVII, where the full story is told.

² Parkman, *History of the Conspiracy of Pontiac*, also his series, *France and England in North America*, especially *Montcalm and Wolfe*, 2 v.

XVI

INDIA

(i) CLIVE TO WARREN HASTINGS

FOR a century and a half from its institution in the last years of Elizabeth, the East India Company carefully confined itself to the sphere for which it had been created—commerce. Its members entertained no ambition beyond that of piling up wealth. Next to shipwreck, the gravest uneasiness of the Directors was caused by native enmity, and the jealousy of rival traders which sometimes provoked it, but they always endeavoured to disarm natives and Europeans alike by submissive generosity and steady observance of agreements.

During this century and a half the political conditions of Hindustan had entirely altered. The supreme emperor, the Moghul, at his capital, Delhi, became less and less powerful. The northern plains of his empire were devastated by a fearful Persian (Muhammadan) invasion and his prestige destroyed by their conquest of Delhi (1739). During the same period other tribes of military raiders, the Mahrattas (Hindus), spread terror through the Deccan, which became tributary to them and their *Peishwas*, or directors.

The decay of supreme authority meant anarchy. The sub-rulers (nawabs and rajahs) had to be conciliated; every local war implied fresh payments; the Company's factories had to be fortified, a thing which always offended the local rulers. The expense of the Company's business grew continually, while the profits became less regular.

Of the Company's European competitors, the Portuguese and the Dutch habitually confined themselves to their regular, old-established ports; with the French it was different.

The French Company, which had reached India latest, at the end of the seventeenth century, and suffered like the English from native anarchy and rapacity, had early taken up the study of native politics with the aim of making its assistance valuable to competing princes and so obtaining privileges from them.

As in Canada, so in India, French directors and officers aimed first at large political advantages, believing that from them would be derived commerce and wealth.

The native princes had at first preferred the English to the French, precisely because they felt themselves to trade and

eschewed politics, but later the decisive results produced on the field by French guns and officers changed their feelings.

The French *Compagnie des Indes* was created by Colbert in 1664. In 1674 it founded its best-known station, Pondicherry, on the coast south of Madras, and about the same time a settlement at Chandernagore, on the Hooghly channel of the Ganges mouths.

The English *factories* (factor = agent) were (a) the old ones, Surat, Bombay (1662) and Madras (1640), and (b) Fort William or Calcutta, founded 1690, on the Hooghly, but nearer to the sea than Chandernagore.

During the Austrian Succession war the able and ambitious French Governor, Dupleix, having made himself valued by the Nawab of the Carnatic, got his permission to attack the English factory at Madras. With the help of a French privateer, La Bourdonnais, Madras was taken, and though the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) restored it to the English, Dupleix continued what was almost his private war by espousing the cause of a claimant to the throne of the Carnatic.

On being thus forced into war by the French agents, the East India Company's officials on the spot did their best to preserve their stations and commerce by beating the French at their own game and supported a rival claimant.

From this time the Company was compelled, much against its will, to be a political and military body. The costs were a heavy drain and the shareholders at home were angry at such deductions from dividends. The English Government could not allow the Company to be destroyed, but was reluctant to add an Oriental war of unknown dimensions to the national burdens. From 1754 it used to send small bodies of royal troops to fight beside the Company's troops, recognising that these wars had become a national rather than a commercial responsibility.

The Company maintained in India some forces of its own, which now became a permanent army, because without one destruction was imminent. For naval help, so necessary on the long Indian seaboard, it relied on the Government, its own ships, though very fine vessels, being only merchantmen. The Government usually kept a sufficient squadron in the Southern, or Indian, Ocean whenever a threat of war existed: it also lent military commanders to the Company, Stringer Lawrence, the "father of the Indian army," being the first and perhaps most important, for he formed the various small bodies of soldiers into a compact army and he perceived and employed the genius of Robert Clive.

Treaties in Europe did not, in the eighteenth century, apply automatically in India, and the rival companies continued their strife as the backers of rival native princes.

In 1751 Dupleix had driven the English candidate for the Carnatic to bay in Trichinopoly, which the Company's force was inadequate to relieve, when Clive suggested an attack on Arcot, as a ruse to divide

the French forces. He was sent to execute his desperate plan with a tiny force of 200 Europeans and 300 natives, and only two officers of military experience.

He stormed the place and then held it—for his strategy had succeeded—against a French siege, by virtue of his personal ascendancy over the native soldiers. When the French raised the siege, Clive enlisted the services of the admiring Mahrattas and pursued the enemy, joining Lawrence in time to relieve Trichinopoly (1752). By this time the French Company was anxious to stop the fighting, and when negotiations began, the English astutely requested the recall of Dupleix.

Peace reigned in the Deccan in good time, for the Company's resources and its heaven-born general, Clive, were soon required on the Ganges. There the Nawab had perpetrated the sudden attack on Fort William and the notorious act of cruelty known by the name of the *Black Hole of Calcutta* (1756).¹

Clive, returning from a visit to England, and hearing at Madras of this iniquity, instantly took charge of measures which should teach native potentates to beware of massacring Englishmen. Admiral Watson's ships carried him and his troops into the Ganges delta and helped to storm the nearest native town, Hooghly (1757). The Nawab marched on him with the usual Oriental host and was so utterly defeated that in terror he offered good terms. Clive accepted his offers, though he knew them to be but delusive, because he also knew that the war between England and France (Seven Years' War) was now again raging and that the French Company would again attack the English. He therefore seized the French Company's station of Chandernagore, and having consolidated the English position in Bengal and prepared his troops, he gave support to the discontented subjects of the tyrannical Nawab. This drove Suraj-ud-Dowlah, the Nawab, to take the field against the English before his French allies could come to his aid.

The battle of Plassey (June 23, 1757) ranks among the world's 'decisive' battles, for there a handful of disciplined Englishmen, armed with cannon, and with a genius for general, overthrew the enormous native host (said to have been over 70,000), and the victory made the Company lord of all Bengal through its native nominee, Mir Jaffier.

In the meantime a new French general, Lally (son of an Irish refugee in France), was threatening the older seat of English commerce in the Carnatic. "There should soon be no Englishman in the peninsula," he vowed.

But a British fleet appeared in the nick of time, saved Madras, and landed the troops, "a raw young regiment," who, under Sir

¹ "It is indispensable to observe that recent attempts to discredit the story as an invention are not well founded." V. A. Smith, *Oxford History of India*, Bk. VII. c. 2 (1920). The 'attempts' recur but with no better evidence.

Eyre Coote, and fighting beside the Sepoys, won the battle of Wandewash (1760), took Pondicherry (1761), and completed the ruin of the French Company as a political power. The result was endorsed in the Peace of Paris (1763).

The victory was a feat of deliberate courage and fine marksmanship, the English line drawn out, to pour as full and fast a fire as possible upon the deep French column: "*At Wandewash under Coote, as in the Peninsula under Wellington, the fire of the thin line was to triumph over the mere weight of the column.*"¹

The radical change in the position of the Company in Bengal compelled Clive to make at once an arrangement for the government of this province, which now in fact belonged to the Company, not as an estate or a colony, but as a political entity. His plan is known as that of '*the dual control.*' The native potentates should continue to govern the natives, obeying the general directions of the Company, while the Company's officials attended to commerce and to white men's affairs. Clive had required from the new Nawab sweeping privileges for the English, as well as enormous sums of money. But the actual expenses of the army which the Company had to keep on foot were also enormous.

The Company's demoralising system was to pay their officials very small salaries, and let them fill their pockets as they could. The directors in London, who were the supreme authority and disposed of all posts and promotions, tried to make dividends high by cutting down expenses in India.

The dual control proved difficult to work and impossible to work honourably. Among the princes and populations of India, integrity and public spirit scarcely existed and justice was rare. Government meant despotism, carried on by force or craft; wealth was the object of officials, and every kind of exaction was habitual. Native governments could be influenced or changed only by revolt or intrigue, and every native political intriguer had now to reckon with the possibility that the Company's artillery and troops might be enlisted on the ruling side. It followed that the English merchants, unaccustomed as they were to political business, were incessantly beset by plausible native politicians, were offered handsome gifts (as bribes) on the one hand, or, on the other, were despised for cowardice or stupidity if they kept aloof. Contempt being a preliminary to murder and massacre, they dared not try to stand wholly aloof.

Clive's own relations with his nominee, Mir Jaffier, now Nawab of Bengal, illustrate the intricate and dubious conditions. He had been the former Nawab's general, but offered to desert to Clive and pay him a great sum, if himself made Nawab. His native agent, Omichand, threatened betrayal unless heavily bribed. Clive promised the bribe and, to convince the man, forged the Admiral's name on the bond. Jaffier did not desert till after the victory, but

¹ H. C. Wyly, *A Life of Sir Eyre Coote.*

was made Nawab, and Omichand was ignored. The Company paid a large annual tribute, or quit-rent, to the new Nawab for the full possession and control of a large territory between Calcutta and the sea. This tribute (called a *jaghir*) the Nawab bestowed on Clive, who in return, and for the Company's own security, defended Mir Jaffier from his native rivals. Next, Mir Jaffier plotted to rid himself of the English by inviting the Dutch Company, at Chinsura, to drive them out by force. The Dutch, in their habitual manner, treated the position as a purely local and commercial one and, though England and Holland were at peace, sent for troops and a squadron from their dominion in Batavia. Clive, who had discovered the plot, armed some of the English Company's merchant vessels, attacked the Batavian squadron as it arrived, defeated it, and received the complete submission of the Dutch (battle of Biderra, 1759). Next year Clive went home exalted in fame and wealth, but struggling with severe disease which invariably attacked ex-Indians. In Parliament, Pitt extolled him and the King created him an Irish peer, as Lord Clive of Plassey. He re-established his family in their old home in Shropshire and became M.P. for Shrewsbury.

But as soon as he had left India, the cupidity of the Company's officials brought disgrace, commercial disaster and massacre upon it, though General Hector Munro saved it from military defeat. The court of directors in London therefore besought Lord Clive to return to govern Bengal. It is characteristic that the directors in India, helped by Clive's own agent and friend, deprived him of the 'jaghir' grant for their own benefit.

During Clive's third tenure of the Government of Bengal, 1765-7, he imposed severe reforms, forbidding the acceptance of gifts by officials, or private trading, but at the same time raising their salaries to a better figure. But he had to face all manner of resistance and intrigue among his nominal colleagues, as well as a mutiny of English officers. On the native side, he arranged that the Company should be free from interference by the Nawab upon paying to him a large annual income, and he also obtained the Moghul's imperial recognition of the Company as sub-rulers of Bengal, Behar and Orissa. Finally, he executed a treaty with the principal ruler of the Deccan, the Nizam, who gave to the Company the rule over the Circars—along the coast north of Madras. Having accomplished all this in a year and a half, Clive returned home in 1767.¹

Clive's departure was again the signal for danger to the Company. Its rapid establishment as a ruling power alarmed the Nizam, who threw aside his treaty when the great conqueror left India, and leagued with the neighbouring sovereign of Mysore, Hyder Ali, a formidable conqueror of Muhammadan race.. Helped

¹ For details see *The Oxford History of India*, or Arbuthnot's biography of Clive in *D.N.B.*

by the secret counsels of the French Governor, Bussy, the two native potentates attacked the Madras Presidency. The Nizam was defeated, whereupon Hyder Ali established himself in his late ally's capital, Hyderabad, as the supreme power of the Deccan, and the Company's officials could only preserve themselves at Madras by a prompt and submissive treaty (1767-1774). An officer in Coote's army described the way in which Hyder and his infamous son, Tippoo, terrorised the population (1781). "For hundreds of miles not a vestige of town or village remains, nor could it be possible for you to know that the country was ever inhabited, was it not for the bones of the poor unfortunate wretches that lay scattered over the once cultivated fields."¹ These commotions and an accumulation of difficulties in the Company at home compelled the English Government to intervene.

Lord North devised (1773) his *Regulating Act* for India with the aim of providing a machinery for real government which should be independent of money-making. The Crown, which had for some time sent fleets and military commanders to protect the Company, must at length openly assume responsibility. Accordingly it was agreed that there should be a Governor-General for Bengal, assisted by a small Council and a supreme court of justice composed of four trained English judges.

The most eminent victim of the vicious old system of the East India Company was Lord Clive himself. On his third return home he found that those whom he had censured or hindered in their unscrupulous but lucrative Indian careers had known how to revenge themselves in England by exciting among the directors suspicions of his integrity. Military expenses and increased salaries drained the Company's official income, so that, while as individuals the directors were as wealthy as other 'nabobs,' as *The Company* they were poor. A crisis arrived when a fearful drought fell upon Bengal and the universal failure of the food crops produced a famine. Instead of drawing revenue, the officials in Bengal were piling up debt and the Company, instead of paying into the Exchequer its annual 'rent,' asked the Government for a loan of a million. Stories of the horrors of the famine, complaints of Clive's severity, resentment at the costly responsibilities which had come with territorial conquests, and the general dislike of 'nabobs' in society combined to turn a storm of unpopularity upon Clive. His enemies utilised the newspapers to load him with "the double odium of his bad and of his good actions, of every Indian abuse and of every Indian reform."

The investigation in Parliament of the Company's position, made during the passing of Lord North's *Regulating Act*, opened the way for a formal attack. Burke and Fox, as leaders of the Whig Opposition, were on the look-out for a political cry more popular than that of 'justice to America,' and adopted the cause of India

¹ *Life of Coote*, p. 303.

against—not the East India Company, influential in the House and the City—but Lord Clive, solitary and unpopular.

A committee of the House of Commons inquired into the history of the Company's acquisition of Bengal. And in Burke's orations wily Hindu and fierce Muhammadan figured as guileless children of Nature, Clive as a rapacious monster worse than Suraj-ud-Dowlah. Indignant to find himself "treated like a sheep-stealer" by men so ignorant of the East, Clive frankly defended himself by vividly describing the situation in which the victory at Plassey had placed him:—"a great prince dependent on his pleasure; an opulent city afraid of being given up to plunder; wealthy bankers bidding against each other for his smiles; vaults piled with gold and jewels thrown open to him alone. 'By God, Mr. Chairman,' he exclaimed, 'at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation.'"

The Commons, themselves so notoriously amenable to financial offers, passed a few abstract resolutions on the propriety of disinterested conduct in India, but had not the face to vote a direct censure on Lord Clive; on the contrary, they passed a unanimous resolution that he had "rendered great and meritorious services to his country." But the prolonged public inquiry, tantamount to a trial, weighed on their victim's mind. Just as Sandwich hounded Keppel and Rodney out of the naval service, so had the leaders of the Commons taught Clive the measure of public gratitude. Ill and embittered, he sank rapidly under a painful disease, and it was assumed that the overdose of opium which ended his life (1774) was taken by him intentionally—an involuntary testimony to the uneasiness of the public conscience.

The first Governor-General (1774) of Bengal under North's Act was Warren Hastings, who was already administering it for the Company, a man well known for great ability and honourable freedom from the universal greed of lucre.

The problem before him was, in brief, (*a*) to provide an honest and efficient system of government which would work regularly, and not only (like Clive's) when a chief of remarkable energy was supervising everybody; (*b*) to place the Company as a new ruling Power in proper political relations with the surrounding native potentates and the titular Emperor at Delhi.

(*a*) Warren Hastings had begun his career as ruler with the usual task of investigating the peculations and counter-accusations of native officials in high station. When natives collected revenue they defrauded the Company, when Englishmen did so the native taxpayers eluded the collectors. Hastings created a service, for revenue and administration, in which native officials dealt directly with their fellow-countrymen, but under the supervision of English superiors. Both the population and the revenue gained by the combination of efficiency with honesty, but naturally a number of natives and white men whose "vested interests" suffered by the alterations became violent enemies of the Governor.

In this and other reforms Hastings was actually hindered by the *Regulating Act*. Lord North and the Commons, regarding power solely as a privilege, had hampered the Governor-General with such elaborate 'checks and balances' that a deadlock might easily occur on the Council, which was supposed to advise him. In the same way, the setting up of law-courts which used the elaborate English legal procedure was an actual difficulty in administering true justice among natives and unscrupulous white men.

Hastings could only keep up practical government and justice by constantly using special authority or with the aid of the chief judge, Sir Elijah Impey, who, fortunately, was his friend. He achieved a sort of combined system of justice: the native courts were subordinated to the principal English official of the district (called the *Collector*); there was to be a Court of Appeal in Calcutta, and a separate court for law-suits between Europeans.

(b) The political relations of the Company with the Moghul Emperor at Delhi and with the more powerful ruler of Oudh were conducted by Hastings with a mixture of English and Oriental procedure. The Company had originally undertaken to pay a very large subsidy to the Moghul, but since the Emperor had become totally powerless, the Company, as his feudal subordinate, obtained from him or his ministers no kind of protection or fair dealing. Hastings, therefore, acted as a native potentate or a mediaeval European king would have done, and repudiated the tribute which the Moghul no longer deserved or could enforce.

On similar principles Warren Hastings dealt, more than once, with the Nawab of Oudh. That is to say, he overstepped what in Europe would be the limits of diplomatic or legal propriety in order to handle the actual situation in a manner suited to the mediaeval conditions of India.

The province of Allahabad having been overrun by the Mahrattas, Hastings took possession of it, and without reference to the nominal claims of the Moghul conferred it upon the Nawab, in order to erect Oudh into a really strong barrier against Afghan and other pillaging tribes. Next, he 'lent' British troops and guns to the Nawab, for a just purpose, the repression of Rohilla robber tribes (Afghans), and in return accepted for the Company's exchequer a very large sum of money from the Nawab. Finally, he ordered the confiscation of a large treasure which ostensibly belonged to the Begums, or dowager-princesses, of Oudh, being aware that it only 'belonged' to them at that moment in order to remove it from the State treasury, which was thus enabled to plead that it was too poor to pay the Nawab's debt to the Company.

The necessity of providing sufficient revenue to pay for government, military operations, and the dividends demanded in London, hampered Hastings at every step. Nevertheless, he maintained a firmer, juster rule than India had known since the famous, if idealised, era of the great Moghuls.

His reward was of the same kind as Clive's and Keppel's. The East India Company's financial difficulties, and complaints against the Company from other commercial interests, produced an inquiry in Parliament (1781-3). Dundas proposed to improve the government by giving the Governor-General more power, but to recall Hastings himself. But Fox came into office and drew up his famous *India Bill* (1783), which caused so lively a sensation in the political world and resulted in the fall of the Fox Ministry and the first Ministry of William Pitt. Dundas, Fox, Pitt, the London directors, the Madras council, and Hastings' own subordinates in Benares and Lucknow, all alike issued reproofs or complaints of the Governor-General, and Hastings indignantly resigned his office and in 1785 left for England. He there received gratitude from the East India Company, praise from the King and a general welcome from London society, but Fox and Burke, still as ever the advocates of abstract justice, and thinking they had a chance of attacking Pitt through Hastings, produced a list of charges against the ex-Governor-General and demanded that the Commons should impeach him. When Pitt required that Hastings should be informed of the charges and should be heard in the House before a vote against him was moved, Fox endeavoured to exhibit Hastings as Pitt's protégé, and declared that the minister was trying to prevent the execution of justice (1786).

In the end Pitt freed himself from the threatened danger, no mean one in the hands of Fox and Burke, by allowing ministerial voters to vote as they chose, and himself supported Fox's motion for impeachment, considering that a case had been made out for a parliamentary inquiry.

Pitt's Act for the government of India had been passed two years earlier, being his first important undertaking (1784). He secured, for the first time, a real control over the political officers, and the actual separation of government from commerce, by providing a new Government Department in England, the *Board of Control for India*. It consisted of two ministers (Chancellor of Exchequer and one of the Secretaries of State) and four other members, the senior of whom soon developed into a new Secretary of State for India. The Board had authority over the Company's civil and military administration. Patronage was left to the Company, except that the higher appointments must be ratified by the Crown.

The famous impeachment of Warren Hastings is now mainly of literary or antiquarian interest. It lasted from 1788 till 1792, very long intervals being left between the hearings. It is possible to consider that the exertion of a galaxy of talent—Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Windham and other great figures—against the ex-Governor of Bengal, however unequal such a contest, may have strengthened greatly the regard felt by Indian populations for British justice. On the other hand, it might encourage them to

disregard the authority of governors so readily disavowed. The revenge of Hastings' enemies was partly achieved, for he was reduced to poverty by the enormous costs of the deliberately protracted trial. The British Parliament at all events proved to India and the world that it was superior to those feelings of admiration and gratitude which are popularly supposed to be aroused by great organisers and generals, while the House of Lords in the end did plain justice and pronounced Hastings innocent on the whole of the charges brought against him.

(ii) CORNWALLIS TO THE MARQUIS OF HASTINGS

When Warren Hastings left India, Pitt and Dundas seized the opportunity to raise the position of Governor-General above both commerce and party. Pitt's *India Act* (1784) greatly improved North's *Regulating Act* for India (1773). But Pitt, like North, had to combine into one system the old and chartered trade rights of the East India Company, the more recent claims and duties of Englishmen ruling over native races, and thirdly, the responsibility of the British Government as to justice, protection and expense which was involved in the strange predicament of an English commercial company having become a political power in a distant continent.

Pitt's reconstruction, or constitution as it may with justice be called, left to the Company all the business and finance, including the 'patronage' or appointment to offices. But with regard to the principal officials the Crown had a veto. In other words, only persons approved by the King's ministers could be appointed. It was not unlike the mediaeval method of appointing bishops: the King recommended a man and the lawful authority duly elected him. The civil and military administration of the Company, but not its trade, was placed under the supervision of the *Board of Control* for India, but this Board was not directly responsible to Parliament.

Pitt caused the gallant Earl Cornwallis to go out as Governor-General (1786-93). He had already sacrificed himself in America, trying to execute the impossible commands of the then government. His rank and lofty character made it equally impossible for him to stoop to any 'base conduct or for anybody to accuse him of it.

Dundas was for most of his career the chief personage on the India Board, and Pitt's confidence in him made him almost absolute as director of policy, though in carrying it out he was compelled to rule through the Governor-General. It was well for Cornwallis that the control of commercial affairs was outside his scope, but less so that Dundas sometimes intervened in Indian political finance in such a way as to allow speculators to enrich themselves. For the short period when Burke replaced Dundas he behaved as badly.

Cornwallis discovered that the position of the Company, that is, of the English in India, was threatened by two dangers—by the military ambition of the new Sultan of Mysore and by the inefficiency of the Company's methods of government, which were quite unsuited to the large dominions which its servants now ruled. He was more successful in dealing with the former than the latter.

The military danger threatened in the Deccan, where Tippoo, Sultan of Mysore, was prepared to conquer his neighbours, the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Rajah of Travancore. Tippoo was the son of Hyder Ali, the great robber-prince, and even more cruel and unscrupulous than his father. He reckoned on keeping the cowardly and avaricious English authorities at Madras quiet by suitable methods, which indeed induced the Governor there to abandon our faithful ally the Rajah of Travancore. He must have been the more confident if he was informed of the instructions which Dundas had laid upon Lord Cornwallis. They were to the effect that he must stick to peace in any circumstance, unless actually attacked by some native power.

Cornwallis, however, read his instructions as a soldier and a man of honour, and took an attack on a pledged ally to be the same as one on the English Company. He took action himself, rescued the Rajah and, in spite of treachery in Madras, so vigorously attacked Tippoo that he had to buy peace and safety by large cessions of territory. His power was broken, and when after Cornwallis's departure he again attempted an attack on the English Company and its friends, he was immediately defeated.

The civil difficulties of the East India Company and the Governor-General arose chiefly from bad finance, which, again, resulted from dishonesty and muddle, so Cornwallis set to work to reform the whole system. It was an ancient native system, whereby the paramount ruler of a State had the State revenue collected by rich and powerful men who were responsible for getting the whole amount by whatever means they chose. These *Zemindars* took care to collect enough to make a handsome profit for themselves, and their power grew so great that they could act as virtual local sovereigns. The effect was rather like a feudal system based on money instead of soldiers and with no just king in the background. When the Company, in Clive's time, became the sovereign of Bengal, the old plan was kept to, the Zemindars retaining their power by bribing the Company's civil officials. The latter were still in the position beloved by the East India Company: their salaries were kept too low, in order to save expense, but they were permitted to earn what they could for themselves privately, though commerce was ostensibly forbidden to them. Presents from native magnates, in fact, provided their wealth.

Cornwallis first raised all the salaries to suitable figures and then forbade any official to accept gifts, a rule which has been ever since one of the foundation stones of English reputation.

But Cornwallis made a grave mistake when he took in hand the native side of revenue work. He was as totally ignorant of native law and custom as the Tudor administrators of Ireland, and took it for granted that the law and custom of English land-holding must be a benefit to any people. He therefore ordered to be made a great survey of Bengal on which the land tax could be assessed—a kind of Indian Domesday Book—but he decreed that the Zemindars were to be counted as *landlords* and that their lands were to be sold if they did not fulfil their taxing duties. The English ideas of landlord and tenant were so foreign to Bengal that to impose them produced the gravest injustice, resulting in the ruin of numbers of both peasantry and Zemindars. In fact, almost the effects of a Norman Conquest were inflicted on Bengal in 1793. Worst of all, Cornwallis was so deeply impressed by the venality of the Company's servants that, in order to prevent bribery, he announced his land settlement to be *permanent*, in spite of earnest remonstrances from Englishmen of experience. It was therefore beyond the wit of man to rectify it, and this 'Permanent Settlement' has lain at the root of a great growth of disaffection ever since.

Another melancholy error was a grand judicial 'reform' whereby a complicated system of Law Courts with a new Code was set up in place of the simpler system of Impey (Warren Hastings' friend). The Code, the judges and all the officials had to be English, and so remained till the natives learned to copy and exaggerate the legal methods of London. Too often "Justice was overridden by Law."

Cornwallis was succeeded, at his own desire, by Sir John Shore (1795–8), an able official of the Company but a civilian. Shore had to choose between observing Pitt's India Act by carrying out exactly his orders from home, or maintaining the faith of treaties already in existence. He elected for the Act and deserted the Nizam of Hyderabad, whom the English Government was pledged to protect.

Great Britain was now already involved in the war of the French Revolution, and, as during the time of Warren Hastings, French machinations had begun among the native Indian potentates. Shore was therefore replaced as soon as possible by a stronger man whose knowledge of the general political situation would inspire a better judgment.

The Marquess Wellesley (at that time still only Lord Mornington) was the eldest of the distinguished Wellesley brothers, of whom the greatest, Arthur Wellesley, first practised war and diplomacy under his brother in India. Wellesley (Governor-General 1798–1805) found on his arrival that the English provinces were in danger of being heavily attacked. The Nizam, deserted by Sir John Shore, was now making friends with French envoys, who hoped to stir him up against the Company; Tippoo, at Mysore,

was thirsting for revenge and the great independent Mahratta prince, Sindia, had trained a fine army. The Company's revenue was in arrears and the English officers of its army were on the verge of mutiny.

Wellesley first skilfully induced the Nizam to dismiss his French officers and disband the new army they had trained for him, then he required Tippoo to 'explain' why he had published a proclamation by the French Governor of Mauritius inviting soldiers to enlist in Tippoo's army. The sequel was a lightning attack on Mysore, where Baird defeated the army and stormed the capital, Seringapatam, and Tippoo fell in the fight (1799).

The new system by which Wellesley controlled India was adopted by him because his most urgent duty was to preserve the Indian dominions from the attacks of Napoleon. It was in order to threaten India that Napoleon tried to seize Egypt; and though Nelson's victory of the Nile in 1798 foiled that plan, Napoleon nearly succeeded in his Syrian expedition, only baulked by Sir S. Smith (1797) at Acre. Nor was it ever certain, until 1814, that he might not revive his scheme of inciting a vast Muhammadan rising against the English. It was indeed mainly with this aim that Napoleon paid so much attention to the Sultan at Constantinople.

Wellesley's system consisted in making the British power supreme over all India, so that neither anarchy nor powerful native States might provide scope for French intervention. Where he could he annexed large districts to the Company's dominions, while elsewhere he induced native rulers to make *subsidiary alliances* with the English power. In these cases the Governor-General undertook to protect our native ally by providing properly trained troops, under English officers but paid from the revenues of the native ruler himself. The Governor-General could then dictate the political policy of the subordinate sovereign without interfering in his domestic rule.

The lands annexed were placed under the now regular English system of government, which afforded them so much prosperity and peace that Wellesley considered their condition the best to which they could attain. "This policy," he said, "promises to improve the general condition of the people of India and to unite the principal native States in the bond of peace, under the protection of the British power."

It was a lofty and hopeful ambition, but, like most schemes for universal peace, the policy was based, in the first instance, on victory.

Tippoo having been disposed of by Baird, Sir Arthur Wellesley's famous victory at Assaye (1803) closed the disturbances of the Deccan and gave that immense region peace for over a century.

The congeries of States and tribes in the north, or Hindustan proper, were more difficult to deal with. The authority of the former 'emperors' at Delhi (the Moghuls) had altogether vanished and the most active powers were the military Mahratta tribes.

A nation of gentlemen-freebooters, something like the mediaeval Scots, but far more numerous and better organised, they felt the same sort of regard for peace and prosperity as King Stephen's barons or Robin Hood's bandits.

The establishment of tranquillity in the Deccan was to them the closing of their natural field of plunder; and their principal potentates, Sindia, Holkar, and the Peishwa of Poonah, ceased fighting each other and prepared to recoup themselves at the cost of the English. Sir Arthur Wellesley's victory at Assaye, which had saved the Nizam and Hyderabad from their devastations, infuriated the confederacy of robbers, who continued 'the second Mahratta War' with desperate courage. It was stemmed and finally closed victoriously by General Lake, whose most famous exploits were the taking of Aligarh and Delhi and the defeat of Holkar at Deeg (1804).

The Peishwa of Poonah had submitted two years earlier (Treaty of Bassein, 1802).

Perhaps the most striking proof of English authority was Lake's rescue of the old, titular Emperor, Shah Alum, from his Mahratta captors and his establishment in Delhi, protected and pensioned by the Company.

The directors of the Company in London, however, were naturally aghast at the costly progress of the Governor-General, and recalled him, though at the same time they munificently recompensed his services. The establishment of order in the Indian continent, splendid and benevolent as it was recognised to be, was not the purpose for which the Company existed. It would be hard to find a clearer instance of the incompatibility of trade and statesmanship.

It was unfortunate for India that the Company and the Government now agreed to reverse Wellesley's policy and imagined that they could cancel his treaties without producing disaster.

The Marquis Cornwallis, now aged and decayed in every sense save his sense of duty, was required (for a fourth time) to sacrifice himself to his loyalty and to procure (for the third time) peace at any price. The arduous journey killed the old man, who died almost in the very act of repudiating the annexation of Gwalior and the provinces on the Upper Ganges. His temporary successor, Barlow, a Company's official, hurried along the same path so recklessly that even the directors themselves were shocked by his disregard of treaties, while the native potentates, and particularly the Mahrattas, perceived the change of temper with the change of rulers and hastened to profit.

Mahrattas and Sikhs were left by Barlow to fight each other, and a promise was even made to the former, just when Lake had victoriously overcome Holkar, that the *Rajpoot* States should no longer be protected from their revenge. This career of disgrace was interrupted by the arrival of a new Governor-General, Gilbert Elliot, Earl of Minto (1807-13), but not before the inevitable cost

of "peace at any price" had been paid in the massacre of the English at Vellore.¹

Minto's earliest notoriety had been won among the impeachers of Warren Hastings, but since that time he had become a statesman and he succeeded in steering a middle course between Wellesley's expansion and Barlow's contraction of British responsibilities. He restored the prestige of England, convinced the authorities at home of their real duty and policy, and procured a far better security for the natives.

By his direction Sir Charles Metcalfe arranged a permanent treaty (1809) with the Sikhs of the Punjab which initiated an alliance of over a century, the Sikh chieftains accepting English supremacy. Metcalfe himself was one of the most eminent creators of the English empire in India and the *Pax Britannica*. The most famous incident of his career is that of the disputed succession in Jeypore. When the fierce chiefs in the 'darbar' tried to reject the lawful heir, who was but a boy, Metcalfe lifted the child on to his knee and announced that the British *Raj* would be his guardian.

But Lord Minto was unable to put down the tyranny exercised by Mahratta and other robber tribes over the Rajpoots and many other Indian native States, for two reasons—the shameful treaties just perpetrated by the late system could not be cancelled, and the Napoleonic attack on Great Britain had now carried into the East a war which strained the English resources there.

The Dutch, as 'allies' of Napoleon, had to place their island empire at his disposal and to see it used as the base of a war on the British in India. This war, which menaced the maritime and commercial strength of England as a whole, Minto was obliged to place first among his tasks. He broke the design of the French by the magnificent feat of taking their central position, the "impregnable" fortress-port of Batavia. Our military and naval preparations were perfect; the troops were commanded by the very competent Auchmuty and led by the brilliant Gillespie, Minto himself superintending the whole expedition. The enemy's almost impregnable works were stormed at daybreak on August 26 (1811). Minto's subordinate in the administration of the conquered island of Java, afterwards, was one who soon became known among the most famous of British empire-builders, Sir Stamford Raffles.

Lord Minto's task outlasted his strength and life, but it was taken up by the able hands of the next Governor-General, Lord Hastings.

Francis Rawdon-Hastings, Marquess of Hastings (previously Earl of Moira), was an elderly man of fashion who had established a claim on the gratitude of the Prince Regent but seemed to have done nothing more. The Prince got him appointed to India, and he there revealed the remarkable ability and resolution which enabled him to complete Lord Minto's work and finally wipe out

¹ See Newbolt, *Gillespie's Ride*.

the disgrace so lightly embraced by Barlow. He had in youth served in America and learned that prolonged lesson of how war and diplomacy should not be conducted. His achievement was the result partly of vigorous fighting, partly of inflexible justice. War had to be waged upon some military tribes among the hill countries whose love of independence had stimulated them to attack the British. Minto had already dealt with the Sikhs; Hastings conducted campaigns against the Goorkhas of Nepaul. The final result was, in both cases, a mutual respect and friendliness of English and Scottish soldiers with the gallant and chivalrous Sikhs, tall and dignified, as well as with the equally gallant, dashing and cheery little Goorkhas. Both Sikhs and Goorkhas henceforth found a sufficient military career in the ranks of the Anglo-Indian army.

But war had to be waged also upon the aggressive peoples which oppressed the peaceable ones by their predatory raids. The last Mahratta war, which closed in 1817, may be counted as the last act in the English conquest of India which Clive began. The result to the Mahrattas was the destruction of the Peishwa's rule, but the recognition of the two other Mahratta sovereignties, those of Holkar and Sindia, as permanent and free monarchies. After this the wilder marauding tribes—the treacherous Pathans and the brutal gangs known as Pindaries—were reduced to the status of robbers and steadily hunted down by the regular armed police, whom the Government were now able to recruit from the Sikhs.

Lord Hastings' assertion of authority and acceptance of responsibility for maintaining a general law and order came just in time to regularise the situation which had resulted from the decay of the Moghul power, the departure of the French, and the evident supremacy of the Company in India.

The people in general in the northern parts considered that they had "a right to the protection of the British Government." That Government, being the paramount power, they said, "is the natural guardian of the peaceable and weak from the oppressions and cruelties of robbers and plunderers, the most licentious and abandoned of mankind." Lord Hastings ceased to profess any formal acknowledgment of the phantom Moghul at Delhi. His foresight of the rapid development of our maritime activity in Indo-Pacific waters is shown by his acceptance of Sir Stamford Raffles' policy and the consequent annexation of the 'island wilderness' of Singapore with its magnificent natural harbour.

XVII

GEORGE III (1760-1820)

THE PEACE AND THE PARTIES (1760-70)

IN October 1760, not long after London received the news of the taking of Quebec, "we lost our good old king, George II" (as a Yorkshire yeoman puts it), and his young grandson, known for a good boy and a good Churchman, ascended the throne amid the pleasant anticipations of society and people in general. George II had naturally been unpopular in London, for he spoke with a German accent, and Whig leaders of Society had taken pains to enhance his unpopularity, for he was apt to express rather bluntly his scorn of their self-seeking. The Whigs had now governed Great Britain for half a century and held that the precedents set up under the two last kings must be observed permanently; but they were to discover that the self-effacement of the sovereign had been due merely to personal circumstances.

George III, though he despised his grandfather, at least avenged him on the Whigs. "George, be king," the Princess of Wales would constantly urge on her son, and his slow and obstinate mind became bent towards this end. Whether or no he had been made to study Bolingbroke's *Patriot King* is unimportant. He readily assumed that the King alone could survey impartially the entire nation and judge of the good of all, that he must be above all parties and ought to be served obediently. He assumed that persons with any other political principles sinned against their obvious duty and were therefore bad men. What to do with kingly power when he attained it he may never have considered; stagnation appears to have been very nearly his ideal.

He was ill-equipped, for his mother had stunted the education of her sons in order to keep them dependent on her. When he mounted the throne he was unacquainted with anyone but his mother's empty-headed courtiers, had scarcely slept a night from home (Carlton House or Kew) and had never set eyes on an English fleet. His mother arranged his marriage to a German princess even younger and more ignorant than himself. Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz was fetched literally straight from the schoolroom to the English throne. Neither of the young couple cultivated popularity. Watchful critics became captious on the new King's earliest utterances; his preference for the terms *Britain* and *Britons*

to *England*, *English* was taken, not incorrecly, to hint at favour to the Scotch, who were traditionally unpopular in London.

George's tutor-in-chief, the Earl of Bute, was a pleasant-mannered Scottish nobleman of amateur tastes. He had taught his pupil how to conceal his ignorance by assuming a stiff want of interest in everything and referring ministers to Bute. George had learned also, only too well, how to cajole, mislead or provoke men into conduct which gave him an advantage over them, the arts of intrigue being well understood at the Princess's court.

George III believed war—at all events the Seven Years' War—to be wrong and wished at once to make peace and to dismiss the Whig ministers. Bute showed him that first Pitt must be got rid of and Parliament converted.

In fact the French minister, Choiseul, made some overtures towards peace (1761) which Pitt discouraged, partly because he wished to carry out the attack on Belle Isle. Next, having secret intelligence of the plans made by the new and warlike King of Spain, Charles III, Pitt advised declaring war on Spain immediately, and on this being negatived the Great Commoner perceived that he was no longer master of the Ministry, and resigned (October 1761). The King offered him a pension and a peerage, the latter he accepted for his wife, who was created Baroness Chatham, the former he could honourably receive, for his means were small and it was well known that he had never enriched himself in office. The public indignation, which was likely to be vented on the King and Bute, was modified by the announcement of these honours, for many persons fancied that the court had 'bought' the popular minister.

In the meantime the General Election of 1761 had given Bute opportunities of disregarding the methods of the last reign and arranging that Crown patronage should be exercised by the Crown and not by ministers or their departmental assistants. When the new Parliament met, a number of fresh members appeared prepared to vote as Bute, and not as the Whig lords, should direct. The King even had the temerity to bestow a few court offices upon gentlemen of Tory families. Such tactics soon drove even the tenacious Duke of Newcastle to resign (January 1762). Bute took his place as First Lord of the Treasury, and the field seemed clear for peace.

Neither Parliament nor people, however, had yet been converted to the royal peace policy. On the contrary, Pitt's labours were bearing brilliant fruit throughout 1762. For the 'Family Compact' between France and Spain was now publicly avowed and war with Spain had of necessity begun.

The capture of Martinique (February 1762) from France, of Havana (June) and Manila (September) from Spain, and of rich Spanish galleons, redounded, in all minds, to the glory of Pitt, not of Bute, and the sight of waggon-loads of treasure rumbling through London to the Tower excited among the populace violent indignation at the tidings of Bute's negotiations with France.

The King and Bute played their cards with more skill at home than in Paris. They knew how to procure the support of the Duke of Bedford and his followers (known familiarly as 'the Bloomsbury gang' from the splendid ducal palace in that district), and Henry Fox knew how to buy over enough members to make a majority. "We must call in bad men to rule bad men," agreed the King.

The Peace of Paris (February 1763) was negotiated by Bute's emissaries with such pressing haste that the defeated Powers, France and Spain, saw that they might safely demand terms which Pitt would never have conceded.

As to territory, Great Britain retained the whole of Canada, an almost worthless tract of Florida, the less valuable of those West India Islands which her navies had taken (Grenada, St. Vincent, Dominica and Tobago), Senegal in Africa, and some places in India, and she recovered Minorca, but she restored to France her principal Indian stations, the best West India Islands (Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Lucia) and Gorée, and granted her the right of fishing in the St. Lawrence and on the coast of Newfoundland, giving up the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, unfortified, to her fishermen.

Both Manila and Havana were hastily given back to Spain, without any security for the payment by that country of a great sum of money due for the first named (the *Manila ransom*). France had also to recall all her troops from Prussia, Hanover and other parts of Germany. Notwithstanding the last provision, Frederick II posed as deserted and betrayed.

But however considerable the annexations made, the benefits which the nation expected to derive from them lay in the future and, in fact, would but enrich individual traders, the East India Company and the inhabitants of the American colonies; no relief for the national finances accrued. Some of the naval officers and seamen had got prize-money, contractors and slave-dealers had made fortunes, but the nation, as a whole, reaped glory, French and Spanish resentment, Prussian spite, European envy, and a terrific load of debt.

The speeches made in the Houses against the peace, including a severe indictment from Pitt, were echoed by violent attacks on Bute in the newspapers and by the London mob, but Fox had lavishly provided a majority of votes and the Peace of Paris was duly approved (1763).

George III is the most striking English and modern instance of a type well known in every age of history: the ruler so conscientiously convinced of his own rectitude and the importance of his principles as to hold all means justifiable to procure his end. He spent forty years and lost a great part of his dominions in restoring the supremacy of the Crown, and almost as he attained it, the clouds of insanity befogged his mind and bereft him of the natural power to exercise the monarchical powers he had reconstructed.

Hardly was the Peace signed when the King found himself posed

by a puzzle which was long to hamper him—how to find ministers not pledged to the Whig family factions: Bute, so successful in political shifts, was terrified by the London mobs, which pelted his coach and nearly fired his house. He resigned and retired resentfully into private life (1763). During the next seven years George III tried different makeshifts.

First, Pitt's self-sufficient brother-in-law, George Grenville, the most celebrated bore in English history, took the helm. He loved to make immense speeches: "When he has tired me for an hour," complained the King, "he looks at his watch to see if he may not tire me for another hour." Finding that he could not get sufficient supporters to fill the places, he applied to the Duke of Bedford's party. They supported his Stamp Act for America (1765), began the attack upon Wilkes and seized the opportunity of a Regency Bill to insult the King ostentatiously by omitting his mother's name. The Bedfords were thereupon dismissed and were succeeded by the Marquis of Rockingham's Whigs, who repealed the Stamp Act (1766), condemned the proceedings against Wilkes, and were then dismissed in favour of a new Pitt Ministry.

The Great Commoner had long been ill of a malady which enfeebled his mind, or he might earlier have taken part in a Government. Being now somewhat recovered he found a friendly Duke, Grafton, to hold the title and dignity of First Lord, and selected other ministers not as a party connection but for their individual repute and talents (1766). Burke afterwards described it as a 'patch-work' or tessellated pavement of inconsistent talents. But Pitt himself felt obliged to retreat to the more tranquil House of Lords, as Earl of Chatham, and he had not imparted to his Duke or his Cabinet so much as an outline of the policy he intended, when he fell again so ill as to be unable to deal with any business.¹

His ministers were, therefore, left to their own devices, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the volatile Charles Townshend, as ignorant as Grenville of financial affairs, devised a scheme for levying Customs duties in American ports (1767). Immediately after this Townshend died, and Grafton put in his place a devoted servant of the King, Lord North. Chatham, as soon as he sufficiently recovered, resigned, as did several of his followers, and Grafton filled their places with Whigs of Bedford's section, the only men who were always in the political market. Their proceedings ran wholly counter to the principles of the Chathamites, and Grafton, after a year, took courage to resign too, whereupon the King made Lord North Prime Minister and arranged for an obedient Cabinet under him. North was the eldest son of Lord Guilford, long a courtier of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and had been from boyhood a trusted friend of George III; he sat in the Commons, as

¹ There still exists in Kensington a *Duke's Lane leading to Pitt Street*, which may perhaps retain the memory of those anxious visits paid by Grafton, carried in his chair, to his sphinx-like leader.

his father was still living. His Ministry was to last nearly ten years.

George III had by this time succeeded in creating in the two Houses a party of his own large enough to support a Ministry. For ten years he had been attaching to himself a body of nobles and gentlemen of little political knowledge but large personal devotion : —Scottish lords whose income was drawn from a court post, members for Crown and rotten boroughs, officials promoted by Bute or North who stood to lose all if they disobeyed orders, rich parvenus who sought distinction, ministerial connections gratified by pensions or sinecures, persons who frankly sold their votes for cash, and a good many respectable and cultivated nobles and gentry of old-fashioned courteous habits.

The entire body voted solidly for ' the Court ' and were known as ' the King's Friends.'

During these rapid changes of Cabinets the King and his ministers had entangled themselves in two controversies, (1) with John Wilkes and (2) with the American colonies, in both of which Crown and ministers put themselves hopelessly in the wrong, their command of so many obedient votes in the Commons making it impossible for blame to alight on any but royal and ministerial shoulders.

(1) John Wilkes was a disreputable individual, but the attacks made on him were both illegal and unjust, and so turned him into a champion of liberty. He was an able scoundrel, son of a rich London distiller, husband of a Buckinghamshire heiress, a skilful popular journalist, and a boon companion of two of the most dissolute of the ministers, Dashwood and Lord Sandwich. He utilised the unpopularity of Bute to make himself notorious. Bute had employed Smollett (historical writer and novelist) to edit a paper, *The Briton*, supporting his Government. Wilkes set up another, *The North Briton*, a kind of parody in which he printed all manner of libellous abuse of Bute, Scotchmen, the King and the King's mother.

By this time everyone perceived the strong influence of newspapers on public opinion, so that when George III desired Grenville to put down the libels it was done, but with more zeal than judgment. One of the Secretaries of State, being a Justice of the Peace, issued a *General Warrant* (i.e. without names) to arrest the ' printers and publishers ' of No. 45 of the *North Briton*. Nearly fifty persons were rounded up and imprisoned ; then, as they told the name of the author—which everybody knew—John Wilkes himself was arrested and imprisoned in the Tower, where his friends and lawyers could not see him. Chief Justice Pratt, Pitt's friend, however, on application being made to him, released Wilkes, by reason of the privilege which protected members of Parliament from arrest for anything less than the serious crimes known as *felony*. Wilkes then sued the officials employed, and was awarded substantial damages. And in this way " a procedure essentially identical with

that in use in France under *lettres de cachet*'' was ended. The personal order of a minister could not set aside the Law and the Habeas Corpus Act, but the King and a Secretary of State were shown to have tried to do it.

King and ministers were intent on revenge, and Lord Sandwich carried favour with George III by raking up some early indecent satires by Wilkes and accusing him in Parliament of 'seditious libel.' The obedient House of Commons passed a resolution that their privilege did not cover this offence and finally expelled him from the House by a vote, so that he might be arrested and tried for libel.

For several years Wilkes lived in France, ingratiating himself with fashionable literary men (Diderot, Voltaire), and accepting handsome subscriptions from English, Americans and Frenchmen as a champion of liberty and a thorn in the side of the English Government.

When he returned it was to become the hero of a struggle by the Commons to abridge the rights of parliamentary electors. In the General Election of 1768 he was chosen M.P. for Middlesex; the House expelled him; Middlesex re-elected him; the House voted him to be incapable of ever sitting in that Parliament; Middlesex again re-elected him; the Court then provided a rival candidate, Colonel Luttrell; whereupon Middlesex elected Wilkes for the fourth time, but the House voted that Colonel Luttrell was the member for Middlesex (February and March 1769). At the next General Election (1774) Wilkes was once more elected for Middlesex, took his seat unopposed, became Lord Mayor of London, and lived to see the record against himself in the Journals of the House of Commons officially expunged (1782). Thereby the House acknowledged its error in attempting to fetter the freedom of the electorate.¹

North's Ministry possesses a curious though usually unnoticed distinction as one upon which were cast beforehand the shadows of certain coming reforms. Possibly reforms for which generations were to agitate might have slid into life under this good-humoured, sensible Prime Minister had not fiercer questions intervened. At all events there was no barrier placed to practical reform by the King's personal servant.

A solitary Act (1773) made the experiment of fixing a *minimum wage* for the Spitalfields silk weavers.

A lawsuit about a slave who had deserted his master on reaching England (Summerset's Case) was brought before Chief Justice Mansfield, who instructed the jury that slavery was a status not recognised by any English law and that it could not, therefore, exist in England. Thenceforward any slave who set foot on English soil, or on an English ship, which in law and custom was the same thing, became a free man.

¹ The briefest and raciest account is Horace Walpole's *Sketch of a New Method of Writing History*, printed in *Last Journals* of H. W.

The worst penalties which had been enacted against Roman-catholics were repealed by Savile's Act (1778) as to England, and a similar Act was about to be introduced for Scotland, when violent riots in Edinburgh and Glasgow caused the Government to hesitate. A crack-brained nobleman, Lord George Gordon, much encouraged by this triumph, posed as a protestant champion and led formidable riots in London and its neighbourhood. London mobs had already enjoyed some rioting over the naval court-martials on Admiral Keppel and his disobedient captain Palliser, and they caught up with ferocity the 'No popery' cry as an excuse for more.

'Lord George Gordon's Riots' (June 1780) gave the worst exhibition yet seen in Great Britain of anarchy. The mobs were far too large for any parish constables to cope with; they attacked and fired the prisons so as to set the prisoners free, then, led by these desperate criminals, or fanatical lunatics, they fired other buildings, drank, plundered and murdered as the whim seized them, and for six days had the capital at their mercy. Many peers were attacked and hurt and the houses of the most eminent judges burned down.

Neither Lord North nor any other minister ventured to exert any authority, for so afraid were the Cabinet of being unconstitutional or unpopular that they persisted that 'only the civil power' must be used, and the 'civil power,' magistrates and parish constables, had no force. Troops, however, could not act without an order, and magistrates and officers could not but remember Porteous' fate. At last, and almost at the last minute, the King himself sent the necessary commands, the troops appeared, and in a few hours the rioters vanished and the flames were extinguished.¹

¹ The classical description is that in Dickens' *Barnaby Rudge*.

XVIII

(i) AMERICA

THE Wilkes affair had shown how little the House of Commons represented the electorate. Its controversy with the colonies spread much further and entailed, first, a species of civil war between the Government and the colonies, then a European maritime war, led by France in retaliation on Great Britain.

The root of dissension lay in the heavy war debt left by Pitt, which three inexperienced Chancellors of the Exchequer vainly strove to reduce. Bute's Chancellor, Dashwood, imposed a very heavy excise on cider, which so much enraged the western counties and the London mob that his successor, George Grenville, turned for extra revenue to America. The Americans, he said, truly enough, were reaping the main advantage from the Seven Years' War and should afford something towards the cost. "Mr. Grenville lost America," said a witty critic, "because he read the American dispatches, which none of his predecessors ever did." He carried a *Colonial Revenue Act* (1764) to impose certain Customs duties at American ports, and a *Stamp Act* for America (1765) making it compulsory to affix certain stamps upon legal documents. Both these were novel steps. A clause in the former Act stated that England possessed the right to draw "both an external and an internal" revenue from America, and the purport of this phrase was sweeping.

External meant Customs duties, always considered to be a branch of commerce regulations. *Internal* meant taxes. From the first founding of the colonies this distinction had been drawn; it was as clear as, say, the present difference between rates and income-tax.

At that time all colonies, English, French, Dutch and Spanish, were assumed to exist for the benefit of the commerce of the colonising country, and for that sole reason they were defended and extended by the mother country. America was expected to provide raw materials for England and to buy her manufactured goods. Iron ore, for instance, came from Maryland to Gainsborough, and nails, tools, and saucepans went out again. Some of the commercial rules in the Navigation Acts, as well as Customs duties, were often evaded by individual Americans, but the lawfulness of them was not disputed.

But never yet had an internal tax been laid on the colonists by

Parliament, so that the Stamp Act introduced a new principle, and six colonies immediately protested. Pitt strongly maintained this old doctrine of a distinction between 'internal' and 'external,' while Burke and the Rockingham party maintained that Parliament had the *right* to legislate for the colonists in all matters, although it ought to be too generous to use it. As soon as they took office they repealed the Stamp Act (1766), but added a *Declaratory Act*, to assert this universal power of Parliament. This illustrates the pedantic moderation of that party and the devotion of Burke, like Pym long before, to the principle of parliamentary supremacy. Pitt impatiently cried that in great questions *rights* ought not to be claimed and defined as in a law-court, that the colonies should be dealt with on politic lines of friendliness. It was a difference in theory alone that separated Pitt from Burke, on America, but it rendered both of them impotent in Parliament.

Hardly had the news reached the colonists of a new Ministry under their champion, Pitt (now Earl of Chatham), than there followed the tidings that Chatham's Chancellor of Exchequer was imposing on America special new customs for a variety of articles, including tea.

Their successful resistance to the Stamp Act had strengthened the colonists in their resentment of all authority, and they promptly ignored their former distinction between external and internal taxation. The New Englanders especially, having learned and forgotten little in either politics or religion since the days of their puritan founders, held that all taxation was a proof of tyranny, that the slave that paid was base, and urged the whole of the colonies to boycott all goods which paid duties.

Such was the situation when Lord North became Prime Minister and had to face the complaints of English exporters, who saw themselves likely to be ruined by the widespread refusal to purchase English goods.

North repealed all the duties except that on tea, "to maintain the principle," he said—but also because the East India Company was in debt to the government and nearly bankrupt and needed the vent for its tea.

American resistance to Parliament thus concentrated on tea, and the famous distinction between 'external' and 'internal' taxes vanished. Dissension raged, however, within the colonies over the demand of the stout patriots for total abstinence from tea. Average dealers and consumers preferred to purchase their tea as usual, the additional cost being quite trifling. The extremists determined to enforce compulsory patriotism, and when the Company's tea fleet was due, armed and disguised men took possession of the docks at Boston and emptied the chests into the water.

In consequence the smuggling trade, always active on New England coasts, flourished exceedingly and revenue officers and their boats were attacked. One such vessel was burnt on a dark

night and her commander nearly assassinated. Another was fired on, and when her return shots fired the wharf and little town of Norfolk, this was advertised as a deliberate massacre by Government order. In Boston the soldiers of the small garrison were mobbed and molested in every way, the populace counting on the men's excellent discipline to keep them from retaliating.

No Government could have ignored the open revolt of Boston, and punishment was inflicted by Parliament in four penal Acts (1774): (a) the *Boston port bill* ordered the harbour of the town to be closed; (b) the *Government of Massachusetts* was altered to a system giving more power to the Governor (now General Gage); (c) *trials for capital causes* were to be tried in Nova Scotia or Great Britain (Boston juries being mistrusted); (d) a *quartering bill* provided for the establishment of more troops.

At the same time (1774) the *Quebec Government Act* provided a permanent and generous system of government for that recently annexed province. Recognition of the French language and land laws and a tolerant and fair provision for the Roman-catholic religion conciliated the Canadian population and secured their loyalty to the Crown. But this wise Act provoked fierce 'protestant' wrath in New England.

Many circumstances combined to produce a struggle, in particular the royal policy and the composition of the North Ministry.

George III (like the Stewarts) regarded any resistance as rebellion, and force as the sole remedy for rebellion. He now personally directed the Ministry. North was to manage the House of Commons and attend to routine; the King himself looked after the votes of the House of Lords. The other ministers were selected for their personal support of the King. Lord Weymouth, Secretary of State, was a ruined gambler, indifferent to anything but money. Lord Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty, had become the King's special favourite by opening the attack on Wilkes. Lord George Sackville (or Germain¹) apparently obtained the good opinion of George III because he had been deservedly disgraced by George II. A strong-willed bully, he ingratiated himself further by advocating vindictive measures against America and severely blaming absent officers. In 1775 he was made Secretary for the Colonies.

George III had a remarkable mastery of personal detail. Unfortunately he seldom perceived anything else. That the ocean is subject to storms, that ships cannot sail from the St. Lawrence to Lake Champlain, that troops cannot walk through a hundred miles of forest, that votes of money do not automatically turn into ships and stores, that a situation might change in the three months which elapsed between the despatch of a message from New York and the receipt of the answer to it, that talents differ, or that talent was a

¹ He took the name of Germain on succeeding to a fortune; was subsequently created Lord Sackville; he is in the present volume always called Sackville.

quality of any importance at all—such considerations did not occur to the King.

It is still a subject of argument whether the American leaders intended from the first to establish independence or went on from step to step : at all events they stepped rapidly.

Their principal organisers and spokesmen were Samuel and John Adams, and Hancock ; their principal diplomatist and envoy to England and Europe was Benjamin Franklin ; the strongest military leader and soundest statesman and the true hero of the American war was George Washington.

The leaders invited a Congress for all the colonies, and delegates from twelve of the thirteen colonies met at Philadelphia (1774) to concert joint measures. They formally denied the right of the English Parliament to tax "*the United Colonies of America*" ; and agreed to collect military stores and assemble troops.

George Washington, a leading Virginian gentleman of military experience and insight, whose nobility of character was well known, took command of the old soldiers and new volunteers who assembled in enthusiasm. What stores of ammunition they had were at Concord, Mass.

General Gage, Governor of Massachusetts, had had twenty years' honourable service in America. He did not believe the colonies would continue defiant and advised the King that a small army would suffice to give Massachusetts a lesson and to cut off New England from the Southern States, after which resistance, he thought, would probably die out. But the piecemeal despatch of troops, a few at a time, hardly fulfilled his stipulations. The British army had been so cut down since the peace of 1763 that George III had to bring his Hanover troops to hold Gibraltar and Minorca and then to hire regiments from German princes. In 1775 Gage sent a small force to seize the ammunition at Concord. The expedition, partially successful, was enfiladed on the way back, at Lexington, by sharpshooters hidden behind hedges and walls. A second expedition was necessary to drive a body of militia from Breed's Hill, above Boston ; the attack was badly managed by Howe (a younger brother of the Viscount Howe killed in 1758 and of the Admiral), and the American soldiers, driven from Breed's Hill, were after all allowed to occupy Bunker's Hill unhindered. The colonists called the bayonet charges of the British troops murderous and brutal ; the British soldiers called the sharpshooters, who picked off the officers, treacherous and cowardly. This bitter feeling increased on both sides during the war.

From this point it was clear that force must decide the issue. But both sides were dilatory, reluctant to embrace severe and costly measures.

A Congress met each year and was the sole general and supreme authority, but the separate States continued to hold each its own Assembly, nor were the Crown Governors as yet expelled. The

States shirked helping each other, nor was the population by any means unanimous. Numbers who were indignant at the attempt to tax did not think the resort to force either right or wise : many cared little for either the principle or the money involved and only wanted peace and quiet. Hence a considerable body of loyalists existed, the Northern States being stronger for independence, the Southern for allegiance. Even in the North towns differed greatly, Boston being predominantly rebellious, New York largely loyalist. A statesman of the first Congress estimated that one-third were ' Whig,' one-third ' Tory ' and one-third impartial. The use of the terms of a century ago to signify ' independent ' and ' loyalist ' is perhaps significant.

The Second Congress at Philadelphia (1775) made the mistake of trying to force a conclusion outside of its own territories, in Canada, although it had recently sent an assurance to the Canadians that no attack would be made on them.

Congress was easily amenable to persuasion from influential persons, and though it had named George Washington commander-in-chief, continually overrode his authority by granting independent commands to ambitious officers such as Lee and Arnold.

Canada had been left almost defenceless by the economy of the English government since 1763. The forts which held the all-important route to New York via Lake Champlain, though full of cannon and stores, were left to a handful of sentries, while Sir Guy Carleton, the Governor of Canada (Wolfe's favourite officer), had less than a thousand men for his vast province.

In 1775, then, Montgomery and Allan easily seized forts Ticonderoga, Crown Point and St. John, and then advanced on defenceless Montreal. Carleton led his handful to Quebec and there held out, with the garrison of Highlanders, confident that the navy would save him next spring. When the first ships, early in May (1776), pushed their way up the St. Lawrence, the garrison sallied forth and the American besiegers fled. In the course of 1776 enough royal troops were sent to Canada to warrant a return invasion of America along the Champlain route.

In the meantime Washington had driven Howe, Gage's successor, out of Boston, but could not prevent him from taking possession of New York. That city had not yet become predominantly important, but its position on the sea made it an excellent head-quarters, as a squadron could permanently assist the military.

There Howe learned, very late, of General Burgoyne's intended advance from Canada, and that he was expected to co-operate, by marching up the Hudson valley to join him. The intention was then to cut off New England from the South and reduce it to obedience. But Howe had a plan of his own to capture Philadelphia, the moral effect whereof was to end the rebellion. Sackville endorsed Howe's plan without reminding him of the greater necessity of meeting Burgoyne, and Howe's habitual dawdling did not permit

him to start for Philadelphia till he should have been half-way towards Saratoga, on the Hudson. The fleet carried his troops into the great Chesapeake inlet, far south of New York, though his subordinate, Clinton, was left behind there with troops ample for a garrison but insufficient for a march.

The capture of Philadelphia exercised no moral effect on America, but Howe established his men comfortably in that luxurious town, while Burgoyne, who had steadily fought his way to the head of the Hudson valley, was anxiously awaiting the promised succours.

Burgoyne's position offered the greatest advantage to the guerilla tactics of the Americans. The English troops were targets for concealed marksmen, and the remainder, surrounded in Saratoga, soon came to the end of their food and ammunition. All that their gallant General could do was to obtain honourable terms from his American opponent, Gates. The *Convention of Saratoga* (October 1776) stipulated that the English troops should be allowed to return to England on pledge of fighting no more. Congress, however, took care to render the keeping of the terms impossible. When the British transports arrived many were prevented from reaching them. Starved, insulted and maltreated, those who survived could only become the serfs of American employers.

Earlier in the same year (July 4, 1776) Congress had formally declared the Independence of the United States of America. The idea of separation from England had now been popularised by several writers, of whom Thomas Paine, an immigrant recently arrived from England, is the most famous.

(ii) GENERAL MARITIME WAR

American emissaries now appeared at every court in Europe to assure the ministers that the American breach with Great Britain was permanent, and to beg for assistance. Most obtained little attention, but Benjamin Franklin, envoy to France, possessed exceptional gifts of diplomacy. Already he had obtained secret help from the ministers of Louis XVI, and as soon as the tidings of the surrender at Saratoga arrived, the French Government signed a treaty with the new State. The war then instantly entered upon a new phase.

France and Spain were hankering to recover the prestige lost in 1763, and France planned the war of revenge. She promised to America the possession of Canada, should this be conquered, she herself to have the West Indies. She tempted Spain to join with the bait of Minorca and Gibraltar; she provided the Americans with the arms they needed, by giving a credit, or loan, on the most generous terms:—no interest was to be charged and the United States might repay whenever it was convenient: finally, she sent out her now well-organised fleets to dominate the Atlantic (1778). A few months later Spain declared war upon Great Britain (1779).

and Franco-Spanish fleets besieged Gibraltar and threatened Plymouth. In 1780 Holland joined the Alliance, while Catherine II of Russia set on foot the maritime league known as the 'First Armed Neutrality.'

Franklin's brilliant talents and the stupidities of the North Ministry rapidly stirred up between them a universal anti-English sentiment upon the Continent. Old Frederick II of Prussia skillfully inflamed the feeling, delighted to behold French, Dutch and Baltic fleets exhausting themselves and those of Great Britain.

From 1777 English merchant shipping suffered great losses, for the Channel and the West Indies were harried by privateers, and next year the Spaniards, reversing tradition, destroyed both our East India and West India merchant fleets off the Azores.

Paul Jones, the celebrated Scottish 'privateer,' made his name in this sea-guerilla war. A fine seaman and an experienced smuggler and slave-trader, he offered for American service and was employed to raid the ports he knew. In 1779 he conducted a small expedition with which he attempted to plunder Whitehaven and the ports of the Forth and the Tyne, but inflicted more panic than damage, because his men, being of piratical type, preferred plunder and mutiny to fighting. Using Dutch or French ports as a base, Jones successfully intercepted the Baltic merchant fleet, but it was convoyed by the *Serapis* frigate, whose captain, Pearson, sacrificed himself for his charges: the convoy got safely home with its precious freight of naval stores, while Paul Jones in his *Bonhomme Richard* with great daring and skill, and assisted by his second ship, fought and captured the frigate. George III knighted Captain Pearson for his courage: "If I meet him again, I'll make him a *Lord*," laughed Paul Jones.

More serious than commerce destruction was the action of the Dutch, who, while punctiliously refusing to 'recognise' the American flag, not only gave refuge to Jones and other pirates, but acted as American agents and made their own West India island, St. Eustatia, a 'neutral' depôt for American trade and warlike stores of every kind. English remonstrances were ignored, and so the eternal difficulty of 'neutrals' in war reappeared.

Finally, Admiral Rodney was sent to stop the underhand warfare in the West Indies, and did so by seizing St. Eustatia, choke-full of war stores and enemy wealth (1781). Holland, thus forced into declaring war, loudly complained of treachery and looked to the Baltic Powers for support. They had already formed an ARMED NEUTRALITY (1780) to resist the British naval claim to search ships for contraband of war. But they could not prevent the Dutch fleet from being attacked off the Dogger Bank (1781), when old Sir Hyde Parker, sent out with rotten ships, nearly sinking under their crews, shot the Dutch and his own fleet nearly to pieces. "Sire, you have need of younger men and newer ships," he told George III.

During this struggle with the maritime coalition of France-Spain-

Holland (1778–82) the English Navy was scandalously hampered by neglect and dishonesty on shore. Sandwich, as First Lord, should share with the French Admiral, De Grasse, the credit for the eventual American triumph.

The Navy, like the Army, had been pared down by the Whigs since 1763, to save money and vindicate their peaceable principles. The Earl of Sandwich had inherited the natural right of a Montagu to high office and naval talents. As nominal First Lord in 1744–51, he had left practical affairs to Anson, but when George III reinstated him at the Admiralty he had learned that a parliamentary position entitled him to assert himself. Between 1771 and 1782 he nearly destroyed the Navy. Money earmarked for ships was paid to private accounts, naval stores were given to private firms and repairs executed only on the surface; ropes and timbers were rotten, provisions poisonous, crews and guns insufficient; powder would not ignite; pay was in arrear; crews had to be pressed and were often largely composed of diseased and aged landsmen and gaol-birds; commissions were sold by the Earl's mistress; admirals who dared to remonstrate were retired or persecuted by legal tricks. Besides these achievements Sandwich might boast that he had shelved Keppel, ruined Rodney and drowned Kempenfelt.

When Keppel was sent (1778) to blockade the French Brest fleet he was assured of thirty-five ships of the line, completely ready: "Not more than six to meet a seaman's eye," said Keppel. The ensuing battle off Ushant was indecisive partly because the admiral was unsupported by Captain Palliser, who afterwards won Sandwich's favour by accusing Keppel of misconduct and clamouring for a court-martial. The court absolutely vindicated the splendid conduct of Keppel and fixed indelible shame on Palliser and the minister who supported him. Public opinion and London riots drove the facts home, and the spite of Sandwich and the King was visited on the nation's most famous admiral, who was never sent to sea again.

After taking St. Eustatia, Rodney¹ was accused of personal greed and abandoned by the Admiralty to be the target of Whig jealousy, in particular of Burke's oratorical and legal persecutions, as a useful decoy from the Opposition's proper quarry, ministers.

Worse than the personal injustice done was the national disaster. Unseaworthy ships meant fearful loss of life, mutinies (six in 1778 alone), indecisive battles and great waste of treasure. In 1782, nine battle-ships went down in the Atlantic; the French intercepted most of the St. Eustatia treasures (which the Opposition professed to think Rodney had looted) and the *Royal George* sank at her moorings, by her bottom falling out, carrying down most of her crew and the great admiral Kempenfelt, "the brain of the navy."² Under

¹ See Callender, *Sea Kings*, vol. III, for his romantic career.

² See *Select Naval Documents*, pp. 149–155, for the finding of the court-martial.

the management of Sandwich there were not enough British fleets to cope with the ring of foes, so that the American struggle was left to unsustained armies and dwindling squadrons, just when France was supplying Washington with munitions, volunteers and, most valuable of all, naval co-operation.

General Howe had not roused himself to interfere with Washington, whose miseries in the calamitous camp of Valley Forge were inflicted solely by the parsimony of his own countrymen (1777-8). Not receiving the great army for which he had asked, Howe went home, and Clinton, left in charge with Lord Cornwallis as subordinate, found himself expected to conduct a double campaign, in New York and in the Carolinas. According to orders despatched from London by Sackville (the military great twin brother of Sandwich), Clinton gave Cornwallis charge of the Southern States, but was himself prevented from doing anything by Sackville's orders to send half his own troops to Carolina, and next, to fetch them back again. This prolonged transportation sufficiently occupied the squadron which was attached to the New York waters and left Cornwallis without a fleet and, consequently, dependent on local supplies. Rodney, in 1780, was ordered to the Mediterranean to succour Gibraltar, which he accomplished after a successful fight off Cape St. Vincent, while Digby was kept watching the Bay of Biscay. In 1781 the West Indies occupied Rodney and Hood; Parker was in the North Sea, and Kempenfelt in the Channel, where he achieved a brilliant success against de Guichen and overwhelming numbers by cutting out the French merchant fleet and bringing it into Plymouth. The naval successes did not help Clinton and Cornwallis, but they had made a considerable impression in Carolina and Virginia, and with naval support they might have achieved their aim of persuading the Southern States to relinquish the cause of Independence; but when Cornwallis was seen to be deserted the loyalists there lost heart and the indifferent threw their lot in with the Independence side which provided a large army. A force of loyalists was cut to pieces and Cornwallis found himself being closed in at Yorktown with scanty food supplies.

Admiral Graves, a respectable sailor but of no great reputation, was at last sent to that coast by Sandwich, with orders, as usual, both vague and controverted by circumstances.

The French Admiral, de Grasse, was master of the situation and had concerted with Washington a surprise. On his large fleet he skilfully shipped almost the whole of the American army which had been facing Clinton at New York and conveyed it to Virginia, to complete the blockade of Cornwallis. Then he took his fleet into the broad inlet of the Chesapeake and blockaded Yorktown on the sea-front. The only chance of succour lay with Graves' small fleet, with which Cornwallis was unable to communicate.

The English fleet opened a mild attack on the more numerous enemy; Graves' captains could not understand his elaborate plan

(owing to lack of signals), so after a drawn fight Graves left the scene, actually unaware that he was leaving a British army to destruction.

The surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown was the end of the war in America (1781), for there were no means of carrying out another army, had there even been one. "Oh, God, it is all over!" cried North, flinging up his arms like a man shot in the heart.

Immediately after came tidings that France had seized St. Eustatia and commanded the West Indies, and that Spain had taken Minorca (1782).

Only on the Rock of Gibraltar Governor Elliott and his gallant Hanoverians were still flying the flag when North at last resigned (March 1782) and his successor, Rockingham, prepared to negotiate for peace.

The disgrace of the British arms was at the last moment suddenly relieved by Rodney's victory over and capture of de Grasse near Dominica, called, after the nearest little islands, the Battle of the Saints (April 1782) and by Admiral Howe's famous relief of Gibraltar (October 1782). These naval victories enabled England to obtain better terms than might have been expected.

It was not difficult to close the war, for all sides were exhausted and France was bankrupt. The new English Government had, while in opposition, always advocated the recognition of American independence and now acted up to its principles.

Franklin, in Paris, was the American negotiator and endeavoured to obtain Canada. This was refused, and Franklin thereupon refused to grant amnesty to the American loyalists on whom the republican party intended to revenge themselves. Sixty thousand citizens of the best blood in the American colonies fled to Canada or Great Britain, those who could not escape being treated as victims by the triumphant party and the property of all confiscated. Forty years later the British Government was still paying considerable sums to the heirs of these ruined exiles.

The Cabinet which composed the peace was that of Rockingham, including Fox and Burke, Admiral Keppel, and two of Lord Chatham's supporters, old Grafton and the young Earl of Shelburne. When in a few months Rockingham died, Shelburne was made Prime Minister by the King.

XIX

EFFECTS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

THE PEACE OF VERSAILLES (1783)

THE principal points of the Peace of Versailles were :—

(1) The Independence of the United States of America was acknowledged by Great Britain.

(2) France and Great Britain mutually restored nearly all the places they had respectively conquered, Great Britain now retaining, in the West Indies, Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Kitts, the Bahamas, Montserrat and Nevis, besides the isles which had not been taken from her, and in West Africa, Gambia. France retained St. Lucia, Tobago and Martinique, in the West Indies, and obtained full sovereignty over St. Pierre and Miquelon off Newfoundland, and Gorée as well as Senegal in West Africa; but she promised now not to fortify her posts in Hindustan.

(3) Spain kept Minorca and Florida, but Great Britain kept Gibraltar.

The wonderful event of the successful revolt of the American colonies of England and their establishment of an independent and republican State produced momentous effects in the Old World.

In Great Britain itself the immediate effect was smaller than elsewhere, and appeared to be simply such political changes as naturally flowed from a change of ministers; but more far-reaching consequences became noticeable early in the next century.

In Ireland, and still more in France, the percussion of the great event produced catastrophes. For the Declaration of Independence was a manifesto of a new type. It declared certain principles to be self-evident truths and asserted that the decision of the American people was the direct result of those principles—not a mere treaty with Britain which subsequent events might affect, nor a temporary political expedient. The preamble stated :

“We hold these truths to be self-evident:—That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights: that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new Government. . . .”

Thus was the abstract reasoning of Hobbes and Locke and Montesquieu translated into a great fact, visible to multitudes who were unacquainted with the English and French thinkers who had digged its foundations.

The immediate effect on England, or at least on English politics, was all the more striking because a faint reflection of this abstract principle might be perceived in the new government which succeeded Lord North the King's personal nominee. The 'Rockingham Whigs' had at least preserved the tradition of a party founded on *principles*. The principles of parliamentary supremacy, personal liberty, peace and retrenchment, toleration for religious dissidents, formed their acknowledged political creed. That their assertion of these admirable principles often appeared to others like a clever trickery to prevent business from proceeding, considerably lessened in London the popularity which they enjoyed in America.

The ten years of the American War wrought considerable changes both in public opinion and among political parties, because politics had suddenly become real, whether among the public or in Parliament.

"The King's War," supported by the personal resolve of the sovereign, made it generally clear that a monarchical party (however cemented) existed in both Houses and occupied towards the King an attitude not wholly unlike that of the Tory party of old. In a short time the term 'Tory' began to be applied to them, when their new leader, William Pitt the younger, erected for himself and them a policy based on principles of national honour (from 1785).

But in 1783 the Opposition, which came into office on North's failure to carry on, was what survived of the Whigs. The shameless political mercenaries who had served George III and North since 1770—Sandwich, Sackville, Bedford—were no longer to be regarded as *Whigs*; that title was reserved for the aristocratic party which throughout proclaimed "the principles of 1688." It included the Marquis of Rockingham and his famous political agent, the Irishman, Edmund Burke; the Duke of Devonshire and all the Cavendish connection; the Duke of Richmond, with his kinsmen, the Foxes, and their Irish connections—Fitzgeralds, Fitzpatrick, Conollys, O'Briens, Tierney, Barré (properly Barry) and Sheridan (the popular dramatist). One leading Irish nobleman, the Earl of Shelburne, chief of the Fitzmaurices, was known as a devoted disciple of Chatham. His importance was due rather to this and to his zeal and wealth than to his political talents, although his intelligence and economic views were ahead of his time.

Once in office, the Whigs were anything but harmonious. Burke, who is now acknowledged as their greatest mind, was not then held for infallible. His statesmanlike dissertations, now so famous, were rare achievements amid a large output of vehement and often extravagant oratory, and Gillray, the great caricaturist of that period, always depicts him as a frenzied figure. The Americans

had regarded him as their champion (in 1771 he became the salaried agent for New York), but that did not recommend him at home.

By far the most conspicuous leader of the Whigs was Charles Fox, younger son of the avaricious and discredited Henry Fox (now Lord Holland). During the American War he achieved a high repute as a disinterested, liberal-minded statesman, but was at least as famous as a man of fashion and a frantic gambler. In both capacities he contrived to strike up a friendship with the Prince of Wales. George III, with natural parental partiality, chose to attribute to Fox the vices and follies of the Prince and complimented him by a personal dislike. North contrived, as usual, to get his laugh from the situation: "I was abused," he said, "for *lying gazettes*, but there are more lies in this one than in all mine:—'yesterday His Majesty *was pleased* to appoint the Marquis of Rockingham, the Duke of Richmond, Mr. Charles Fox, etc., etc.'"

Rockingham's sudden death during the negotiations made a fresh figure-head necessary, and the King appointed Shelburne, but Fox, fiercely jealous of Shelburne, snatched at the first opportunity of quarrelling and seceded from the Ministry, carrying with him, not only Burke and Sheridan, but the Cavendishes and all their voters (July 1782).

The King begged Shelburne to continue responsible, and with young William Pitt for Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons, he contrived to hold together a Government to finish the Peace. The Whig lords and Fox claimed that it was for them to inform the King whom they selected as leader of their party—virtually Prime Minister—and that the new chief 'ought not' to bring any new member into the Cabinet; but the King and the minister could easily defeat these unconstitutional claims. Charles Fox then resorted to another device for turning out Shelburne and Pitt, and forcing himself into office, by organising the first *party coalition* in a modern House of Commons. Fox had been for eight years the leader of opposition to North and his policy, and had emphasised his personal indignation at that minister's un-Whiglike principles and unprincipled practices: Lord North had for twelve years doggedly carried out the King's personal policy. Now the two suddenly made a close alliance and by uniting their two sets of followers carried a vote against the terms of the peace (February 1783) which compelled the resignation of Shelburne's Cabinet.

This coalition of Fox and North disgusted the public and enraged the King. He could not avoid placing them in office, but eagerly watched till they should make some false step.

With this Fox early gratified his sovereign. His *India Bill*, though acknowledged to be excellent in other respects, contained a clause to deprive the Company of all patronage and transfer it to his own hands for the next four years, that is, over the next General

Election.¹ The device was so obvious that it was hardly necessary for his opponents to point out the fact. General indignation was voiced in the City, and the East India Company prepared to resist. The obedient majority of Fox and North carried the Bill through the Commons, but in the Lords the King assisted the Opposition by the unconstitutional method of empowering Lord Temple, William Pitt's cousin, to say that whoever voted for the Bill *would be considered by the King as his enemy*. This was written on a paper for Temple to show.

The India Bill was thereupon rejected by the Lords, the King required Fox and North to resign and named William Pitt First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. That Shelburne was ignored was due chiefly to his extreme unpopularity. Nearly everyone considered him deceitful, 'a Jesuit,' 'Malagrida.' It was an age peculiarly adept in spreading slander, and Fox had spared no pains to propagate his 'suspicions' of his co-Secretary of State. The grounds appear to be that Fox thought him a rival and that Shelburne had suffered from an execrable Irish education which had made him incapable of expressing himself without a circumlocution, usually complimentary, which to the average Englishman gave the impression of ornate insincerity. It was the habitual plan of Fox, in Cabinet crises, to insist in the first place on his own absolute and permanent supremacy.

¹ All appointments in British India were for four years to be awarded by seven commissioners 'chosen by Parliament'; the list was drawn up, all being confidential supporters of Fox. Afterwards the patronage was to be vested in the Crown.

XX

AGRARIAN AND INDUSTRIAL CHANGES

(i) THE NEW AGRICULTURE (1688–1783)

THE eighteenth century witnessed a great and general improvement in all branches of Agriculture; new crops, implements and methods were introduced, step by step, in different parts of England, taking over a hundred years to become universally adopted.

The western counties would seem to have led the way, just before the Revolution. The gentlemen of Worcestershire had combined¹ to send an agent to examine into Dutch modes of farming and bring them a report in the time of Charles II. In Lancashire, potatoes had been introduced (probably from Ireland) with great success among the small holders. But it seems to be in North Somerset that direct mention of new methods is first made, experiments being tried at least as early as 1683 in sowing land "with parsley-seed, clover-seed, tray-foyle, turnips, buck-wheat and several other fantasies which I doubt not will not pay half the charges," as a horrified old steward reported.²

It was not, however, till after the death of Queen Anne that these and similar improvements made any general advance in the country. In the home and eastern counties and some of the Midlands several of the great landlords (from about 1713) experimented on a large scale in turnip and potato culture, the hedging of small fields (such as the Lancashire folk had long since practised) and the use of 'artificial' grasses for feeding cattle. They acted as agrarian missionaries, persuading farmers and labourers by prizes and wagers to try fresh methods and new implements. It took all the efforts of Sir Robert Walpole's brother-in-law, Lord Townshend, in Norfolk, and of the magnificent Duke of Argyll in Scotland, to persuade the farmers to grow turnips, potatoes and cabbages in their enclosed fields. Turnips and rats were Hanover plagues, muttered the old folk, and they were very slow to plant clovers and sainfoin, and to copy their landlords in making horses draw large drills and hoes over the land. Even hoeing by hand was not yet universally thought necessary. Wits and yokels could agree in deriding 'Turnip Townshend,' but what he and Argyll and other enthusiasts gradually accomplished was no less than a

¹ Cooksey, *Essay on Lord Somers*.

² Hylton, *Hist. of Kilmersdon*.

benevolent AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION. The better tillage largely increased the yield of corn crops, while, above all, the field-grown *roots* and *cabbages* made this tremendous difference in farming—that sheep and cattle could be kept well fed in winter, instead of being killed off or half starved. This made possible a vast improvement in the breeds of domestic animals. Sheep, which were still, as in the thirteenth century, more important than cows, were now bred not only for wool but for food too, and ‘seven-year-old mutton’ by the middle of the century displaced beef with the well-to-do. Noblemen became as proud of their prize sheep as mediaeval lords had been of their deer, and “Come and eat a bit of mutton with me” was the familiar form of an invitation to dinner.

One unexpected result was that the wool of these more pampered sheep grew much longer, *i.e.* coarser, which, again, meant that foreign broad-cloth manufacturers did not want to buy it, so that the wool-export declined, to the detriment of Boston, Lynn and other ancient wool ports, which now fell into decay. On the other hand, the home manufacturers of *worsted*s, in Norfolk and in the West Riding, and of flannel in Lancashire were ready to take the long wool and provided an ample market for it.

The pride felt by many great landowners, as the eighteenth century advanced, in the extent and well-being of their estates resulted in the appearance of a good many ‘model landlords,’ who increased in numbers in the nineteenth century. They lavished fortunes on all manner of improvements, whereof the people in general drew much benefit, and succeeding landlords profited by raised rents. But the effects were diverse. Young heirs came back from the *Grand Tour*, that indispensable conclusion of a fine gentleman’s education, keen to create at home grand mansions, woods, gardens and good roads like those they had seen in France or Italy. Palaces such as Bowood, Houghton and Stowe were built, or smaller and often more elegant ‘classical’ mansions replaced the gabled manor-houses of an older style. Once built, they were filled with pictures and statues. The immense country palaces of the noblemen often proved an embarrassment to successors, but the gardens and sheets of water, and above all the woods which they were busily planting throughout this century, were boons bestowed by them on the nation. Probably to the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries may be ascribed the tiny water-works to be found all over our farm-lands, with their carefully traced ditches, little sluices and bridges. A great deal of the ‘natural beauty’ of England was created during the eighteenth century, when landscape gardening was invented and artist-gardeners were employed by noble patrons. On the other hand, the magnate too often fenced in a useless park to keep his new palace secluded, and might even include the church as a choice object in his view among the shrubberies.

The tendency of great families to extend their properties was

recognised as a natural and even laudable ambition. From 1700 it became the fashion to buy out independent tenants or small landholders, so as to unite a large stretch of land where all the inhabitants were tenants. Many a squire preferred selling his little property to the rich nobleman to remaining as a poor neighbour among wealthy families with whom his own could not afford to associate. Such people would go to live (like the Eliots in *Persuasion*) in one of those pleasant towns rebuilding in the new style, from the Restoration till 1800—Leicester, Shrewsbury, Exeter, or the newer towns, Tunbridge, Leamington, Cheltenham, and above all, Bath, all of which by the middle of the century were favourite resorts for the gentry, whether as permanent residents, or visitors during the fashionable season. The Bath and Tunbridge seasons were recognised by 1760. Brighton became fashionable for the sake of the new cure, 'the sea-bath,' patronised by Lady Chatham for her children.

The process of collecting land, with its revenue, into the hands of large landholders was going on at this era (about 1689–1789) all over Western Europe, and with the same underlying cause. Everywhere the growth of population made necessary a larger production of food, so that either fresh land must be put under cultivation or heavier crops obtained from tilled soil. In England there was little fertile unoccupied soil to be settled, and the attempts (made under Charles I) to reclaim wastes and marshes had been highly unpopular. But it was feasible to provide scope for the new methods of agriculture, in the first place, by giving up the ancient mode of cultivating in joint and *open* stretches of cornland (known as common-fields, or *champion*), where waste and slowness were inevitable, owing to the joint cultivation and common grazing after harvest, and assigning instead to each cultivator his own portion in a compact block, so as to make it possible for him to till it properly and as he liked.

The practice of *enclosing* with hedge or fence a man's separate holding had been tried in various districts at various periods, from the Anglo-Saxons to the fifteenth century (and especially c. 1480 to 1560), but usually either where some man of influence had done it on his own estates, or where the climate and soil, or the local customs had made it for the interest of all to cultivate in small, sheltered crofts (*e.g.* Lancashire), but it had not become a general system before the eighteenth century.

It was now eagerly advocated by the great landlords, who were usually supported by the middle class and the large farmers, and by those small holders who had a little capital. As the cutting up of the arable land affected the lawful rights of everyone, and in particular ended the ancient custom of feeding beasts upon the stubble of the common-fields, and closed them to travellers, it was necessary to have an Act of Parliament in each case, a serious and expensive proceeding, paid for by the parishioners until a General

Act was passed (1836) to make the process legal anywhere, provided that two-thirds of the inhabitants of the parish, in numbers and value, desired the enclosure.

This enclosing resulted in large and compact farms, better tillage, and a very great increase of the food supply, which continued to be plentiful and cheap till after the middle of the eighteenth century, but the increased wealth of the countryside was apt to be acquired mainly by the great landlords, in the form of rent.

The next step was to enclose the open hills and pasture lands, which meant that the landlords (as representatives of ancient manor-lords) simply took private possession of woodland, moors and wastes, which had formerly been treated as joint property open to lord and tenant in common and used for pasture, fishing, fuel, etc. It is typical, for instance, that the principal hot springs of Buxton, formerly open to the public and to the weather, and shockingly abused, were monopolised by the Earl of Devonshire, who built a house over them and let it to tenants who made what they could out of it. This made the springs far more useful and the place became more orderly and decent. The tumult of disorderly crowds had even driven some lady patients to go to Manchester for the week-end to get a few quiet nights.

When common-lands were to be enclosed a 'Private Act' would be obtained for the enclosing of the parish, empowering certain individuals to fence this or that stretch of down, woodland or open pasture. It was possible to oppose such an Act, if any of the objectors knew how to do so, and such an opposition might succeed (as, *e.g.*, for the Isle of Axholme and the moors of mid-Somerset). When the Act was passed, commissioners were directed to measure and apportion the shares. They usually tried to be fair, and sometimes insisted on leaving some open pasture-land for the poorer residents. But the great landlord always got the lion's share. Smaller portions would be assigned to any remaining yeomen, and to the parson, and even some left for the poor who formerly had had access to the whole, or for an anciently endowed hospital or school, which would let its land. The general result was that though the quantity of food was increased, the country labourers were worse off. In many cases the loss of pasture and fuel might mean destitution, for the cow, geese or poultry must be given up and the family depend entirely upon the small weekly wage, so that Cobbett, at the end of the century, roundly declared that the better the soil, the worse off were the people, for only where the soil was too poor to be worth enclosing were the country people still able to find fuel for themselves or turn out a few geese to feed.

From 1783 this descent into poverty became grievously noticeable, especially when a bad harvest came. The noblemen who had laid estates together, merged small holdings in large farms, and enclosed hills and woods in their own parks and pastures, were frequently 'charitable' towards 'the poor.' They had ceased to

think that wages must match the price of bread, but they often sold corn to the poor below its market price. Unhappily, fashion and the size of their estates led them to leave the care of their property to agents who devoted their pains solely to increasing the income of their employers, and this became universal when the pursuit of gambling and racing drew most young gentlemen to the dissipations of the capital in George III's reign.

If the country labourer had really lived on wheaten bread he must have starved, and he perhaps came nearest to doing so in the wheat counties of the south. But in other counties his food was oftener, as in mediæval times, bacon and peas, oatmeal or barley porridge with milk, dark bread of mingled wheat and rye, or, in the north, oateake. These were less costly than wheaten bread and to healthy workers in the open air doubtless more nourishing. But for the next century town-dwellers would despise the countryman for eating brown bread, till he himself came to think it beneath his dignity.

There were plenty of observers who perceived the injustice of depriving the poor of their access to the old open lands, but they could not influence the majority in the Houses, who were sure that a larger quantity of bread must outweigh any loss of other food. People quoted, but rarely acted upon the popular sarcasm:—

“The Law pursues the man or woman
Who steals a goose from off the common,
But lets the greater felon loose
Who steals the common from the goose.”

In 1760 few of the counties of England were wholly agricultural; the ‘domestic’ system of weaving and spinning interspersed handicraftsmen among peasantry, the numerous small ports dotted along the coast could occupy many persons in fisheries and commerce—half of which was smuggling; while the small yeomen and the middle class of the little towns also provided considerable occupation and wages; the food supply, from 1720 till 1783, apparently kept pace with the increasing population, and did not rise in price till after the general rise of all prices which set in about 1760. Probably at no time was the mutual reliance of tillage and industries so close and so successful as between 1700 and 1760. It has been even termed ‘one of the golden ages of the English peasant,’ and with some show of justice, if ever he enjoyed such an age.

Just when the equilibrium so earnestly sought by Tudor administrators appeared to have been attained, an unforeseen transformation in methods of industry began and substituted a set of fresh problems for the old and vanquished ones.

EMIGRATION FROM THE HIGHLANDS IN 1773

(Boswell's *Tour in the Hebrides*, Chap. VIII)

(On the topic of emigration) “Dr. Johnson said that ‘a rapacious chief would make a wilderness of his estate.’ Mr. Donald McQueen told us, that

the oppression, which then made so much noise, was owing to landlords listening to bad advice in the letting of their lands; that interested and designing people flattered them with golden dreams of much higher rents than could reasonably be paid; and that some of the gentlemen tacksmen, or upper tenants, were themselves in part the occasion of the mischief, by over-rating the farms of others. That many of the tacksmen, rather than comply with exorbitant demands, had gone off to America, and impoverished the country, by draining it of its wealth; and that their places were filled by a number of poor people, who had lived under them, properly speaking, as servants, paid by a certain proportion of the produce, though called sub-tenants."

(ii) THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION (ABOUT 1760-1800)

If the term *revolution* be used to signify, not a sudden occurrence, but a reversal of fundamental conditions, then is the expression 'Industrial Revolution' rightly applied to the changes which during the latter part of the eighteenth century altered the whole system of English manufactures and commerce and transformed our social and political system.

England was the first country to experience these changes which afterwards spread to the rest of the world.

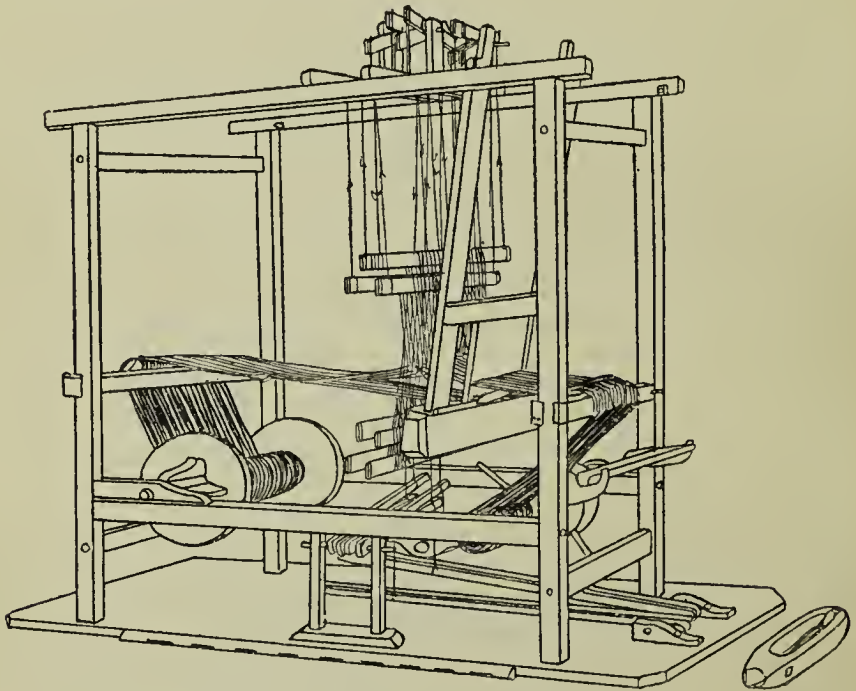
This revolution was the result, not of the spread of fresh ideas among the population, but of the introduction of new objects—machines—on a wholesale scale. *Things*, rather than thoughts, rapidly assumed the foremost place in attention, and so brought about a type of civilisation which may correctly be called 'material,' life being thenceforth dominated by *things* to an extent unprecedented even in the age of armour and castles. In the Middle Ages the changes wrought by the introduction of water-mills, spinning-wheels, or printing took several generations to evolve, so that men gradually accommodated their habits to them. The water-wheel was known before the Norman Conquest, the spinning-wheel under the Plantagenet Edwards, but they were not linked together till the eighteenth century, and then fresh inventions succeeded each other very rapidly and were so quickly employed that old conditions were upset suddenly. Between 1770 and 1790 population gathered thickly in towns, the relations of employer and employed wholly changed, export to foreign markets became a main purpose of merchants and Government, great wealth and great poverty were seen in sharp contrast side by side.

One generation witnessed the transition from hand-loom to weaving-machines driven by a wheel turned by falling water, or by an engine driven by steam. In the same period coal and iron mining and all kinds of metal-work were developed enormously, while new means of transport, *canals* and *metalled* roads, linked the towns of Great Britain together by routes which enabled heavy goods to be conveyed easily.

A glance at the chronology of these inventions (p. 197) will show how rapidly were adopted the machines which superseded the

'domestic' system of textile production by the 'factory' system, and produced, from about 1770, a sharp distinction between industrial and agricultural districts.

The *Industrial Revolution*, though the chief, was not the only cause of the poverty into which the rural population of the south had begun to sink between 1760 and 1783. The most far-reaching must have been the general decline among the gentry of country tastes and the lowered tone of morals and conduct among them. Extravagance of all kinds ruined many landowners whose debts



A HAND LOOM WITH SHUTTLE ENLARGED.

were to be paid only by harsh rack-renting. There were many years of bad harvests, and the heavy taxes for the American War must have told. During those ten war years emigrants could not go across the Atlantic, while trade suffered from the loss of markets.

There arrived in England, also, a considerable number of immigrants of a type likely to lower the standard of living among the English poor. Before the middle of the century large numbers of very poor Jews came to this country, chiefly from Poland or Germany, hawkers or hucksters by profession, or journeymen of the humblest kind.

A small number of Jew capitalists had settled in London before, Spanish or Portuguese under the two last Stewart kings, and Dutch

under William III. These were financial colonists, and from 1689 were largely concerned in the loans of the London money market. One had been an eminent army contractor for Marlborough. They were strong supporters of the Hanoverians and the Whig régime.

The poor arrivals worked for very low wages under employers of their own race, and so began what has ever after been termed 'sweated' industry.

They also extended among the industrial classes pawnbroking, moneylending and second-hand dealing of all kinds, frequently concerned with smuggled or stolen property. The effects were particularly noticeable in London, where efforts were made (1730-50) to induce the poor Jews to emigrate to Georgia, Carolina or Nova Scotia—efforts which failed because this people refused to work except in branches of trading, or to separate from their neighbours. From London they formed colonies in other towns, Liverpool, Manchester, or Exeter.

A different kind of invasion was that of the Irish labourers, who now regularly appeared in hay and harvest time to work on the large farms. As they intercepted pay which would otherwise have gone to the families of the labourers, their coming was resented by the country working folk.

The inventions which made manufacture more efficient were a natural response to a rapidly increasing demand for all kinds of clothing and implements. This demand came from many quarters: there were the proprietors and workers in those parts of Europe where new agricultural or mining enterprises were on foot, including Russia; there were the merchants of India or China; there were, above all, the increasing populations of North and South America, where a main business of the people was to grow supplies of raw produce for European markets. In return, Europe, and especially England, sent out manufactured articles. It was the close connection of Portugal with Brazil which gave to Portugal's constant ally, Great Britain, favoured access to an apparently unlimited commerce.

The triumphs of the English Navy, from 1689 to 1814, were solidly supported by our merchant marine, in every fresh colony "trade followed the flag." Every treaty contained commercial clauses, put into active practice by exporters. This stimulated manufacture and the towns grew steadily (from 1700) in size and wealth, so that armies of workers were ready to manipulate the new inventions. The employers saw no limit to the prospects of the export trade and sought to increase output to the utmost; but when they found themselves faced by competition, whether from foreign merchants or from each other, they sought to keep down the cost of manufacture. The larger their output and the greater their undertakings, the lower were the wages they paid.

The alteration in the methods and the scale of production implied some alteration in the mental attitude of the manufacturers and of

the Government. It was now assumed that a vast increase in the quantity of manufactured things must, of course, be excellent. This had not been the mental attitude of the past, though for some three hundred years everybody had regarded regular employment as the one natural way of ensuring national prosperity, "to set the poor on work" being accepted, from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth, as the most useful undertaking of the good citizen. But the old system had aimed at ensuring that the gains should not all be absorbed in "private and singular profit," but get distributed. It was for this desirable end that Tudor Parliaments and Councils had worked out so many statutes regulating trade and agriculture, and that the import and export duties were throughout the Stewart age incessantly being varied. In the eighteenth century, too, every few years saw a new treaty or a fresh regulation till laws were piled on laws and exemptions, monopolies, bounties, duties, drawbacks, prohibitions and licences composed a tangle too huge for the memory of merchant or magistrate. With relief and admiration, therefore, did men hail the new and clear philosophy of commerce set forth in Adam Smith's famous book, *The Wealth of Nations*.

That *political* Economy, or the upbuilding of a national well-being in material things, might be a science, and as such could be studied and practised by statesmen, was an idea as old as the Greeks. But Adam Smith's theory propounded a plea, novel to most men, for *less* regulation, based on such principles as—that there is a natural tendency for supply to fit itself to demand, and that all persons will act better for their own interests than a Government can legislate for them. A further novelty was his view of commerce as a universal accommodation, even between different nations, rather than a conflict of international jealousies. Smith's reliance upon individual enterprise and peaceful co-operation fitted well with the idealist temper just then spreading among the cultivated in England and the west of Europe. The general impression derived from his book was, that the less interference Government bestowed on commerce the better, and his conclusion could be readily accepted by many men who were too lazy to read his book.

Already one section of Tudor law had (since 1660) become obsolete—that which ordered magistrates to fix 'reasonable' wages and prices. But the law of apprenticeship was still carried out by all the regular old trades and one new one, and overseers and magistrates did their best to apprentice poor children to craftsmen who would both train them and pay for their maintenance during the time of training. The apprentice system was excellent from various points of view: it really taught the children to earn their living, and it ensured a supply of capable workmen (journeymen) to be employed. It included farm and domestic service. It could also be used to remove large numbers of children from the poor-house and off the rates by sending them to a *factory*. But this employment was likely practically to be slavery. The large

numbers to be attended to in populous villages made it impossible for the authorities to give personal investigation to every case.

The first striking endorsement of Adam Smith's principles was Pitt's commercial treaty with France. But it hardly afforded a good proof of Smith's theory, for the import of English textile goods nearly ruined that industry in the French towns, Lille, Amiens and Cambrai, though it stimulated larger manufacture in the north of England. The French, on the other hand, exported their wine and silk goods more largely to England—and then English silk-workers complained.

The industrial race of machinery in England may be said to have been started among the coal-miners of Newcastle-on-Tyne, where, in 1721, an attempt was made to drain water from lower mine levels by a machine-pump. There, too, was a beginning made towards mechanical traction in the shape of a kind of tramway with wooden rails along which horses pulled small waggons, known as 'Newcastle roads.' But there then came a pause in the changes of this district, while more startling changes occurred in the woollen and cotton districts of Yorkshire and Lancashire.

The TEXTILE MANUFACTURES had long taken the first place among English industries and they developed on a new scale in the eighteenth century. Both spinning and weaving were (till 1760–70) extensively practised by numbers of persons living in their own homes and possessing in their gardens and little fields a supplementary means of subsistence so that they were tolerably well-to-do. The whole family worked, for there were many simple processes which children could perform. This system (the *domestic system* ¹) lasted in parts of Somerset and Gloucestershire till after 1800 and in the West Riding till about 1770, but in Lancashire work had concentrated earlier in the towns, and the cotton factories were those to which the London pauper children were most often sent.

The humid climate and abundance of swift-running streams in Lancashire favoured bleaching and dyeing. From early Tudor times Manchester was renowned for its 'whites,' or bleached flannel cloth, as well as for a material of mingled wool and linen, or wool and cotton, called *fustian*. Many kinds of linen, woollen and cotton cloth were made in Bury, Blackburn, Oldham and the other small towns, Manchester being the central mart, whence long processions of pack-horses went every week to London, Bristol, Hull, and other ports.

In 1733 the invention at Bury of a *flying-shuttle*, which moved by a kind of spring, enabled weavers to work faster and to make wider widths than heretofore. This created a larger demand for yarn. Previously, three spinners used to be reckoned for one weaver, now ten might be wanted. Manchester had for two centuries or more been buying yarn from Ireland, and more recently

¹ A famous description of a late survival occurs in George Eliot's *Silas Marner*.

from Hamburg, but in this century a new resource was found in the true cotton of the East.

As commerce with the Levant had increased, cotton-wool was brought in considerable quantities to London, whence the pack-horses carried it back to Manchester. The result, coloured and patterned cotton fabrics, became quickly fashionable, though the London (Spitalfields) silk-weavers loudly complained and tried to get this competing manufacture forbidden.

For thirty years after the adoption of the flying-shuttle the spinners in the north, whether of woollen or cotton yarn, found themselves among the better-paid workers, till Hargreaves' invention of the *spinning-jenny* enabled one wheel to turn a dozen spindles. The result was that the spinners now produced so large an output that the price of their yarn dropped disastrously.

Next came Arkwright's *water-frame*, applying the force of falling water to turn the wheels; ten years later this was perfected by Crompton's *mule*. Finally, Watt's steam engine was applied to turn the spinning-machines (1789).

With every step less skill was needed and 'labour was saved': which turned out to mean, not that working men would have less toil and more leisure, but that children would suffice to tend machines, and therefore were employed instead of men, at much lower wages.

The use of water power led Arkwright, Peel and many contemporaries to set up factories with machinery in the moorland dales of East Lancashire and Derbyshire. But the use of steam and need of coal drove them back to the coal-field, where they built ever larger factories, holding hundreds of workpeople.

The use of water and steam power left the hand spinners and weavers hopelessly in the lurch. The trade of Norwich rapidly dwindled. Two Somerset towns, Frome and Shepton, vainly petitioned Parliament to forbid the spinning-jenny, because fifty persons could with them do as much work as five hundred hand workers, the result being unemployment and starvation. The Somerset towns and the Stroud valley, however, with coal at hand, still contrived to hold their own in weaving the fine cloths, the former probably powerfully aided by the fact that the local landowners were not the manufacturers, the latter, owing to the Government contract for red coats for the army. But Wiltshire, without a coal-field, saw its mills close and its workmen with their families reluctantly emigrate to Yorkshire, to enter the factories they detested. At this time, too, the small Cotswold towns fell finally to decay.

The machinery for the factories was mostly made on the Staffordshire iron and coal field, where Birmingham and the neighbouring towns, Dudley, Bilston and all the 'black country' between Birmingham and Wolverhampton had been famous for all kinds of smithy work from early Tudor times. Here also new inventions

provided an ample supply to meet the new demand. That iron might be smelted with mineral coal in lieu of charcoal is said to have been discovered early in the seventeenth century, but if so the discovery had been deliberately suppressed by the local ironmasters and had to be made over again (1735). As the new process enabled cast iron to be much better worked in coke blast furnaces, the Staffordshire towns soon supplanted the old-fashioned iron districts of Dean and Sussex.

When, in 1768, a leading Birmingham ironmaster, Boulton, induced the Scottish inventor, Watt, to leave Glasgow and join him, they made Birmingham the busy forge and mart of machinery. Their practical steam pump (1778) opened up the enormous stores of iron and coal on the mine-fields of Newcastle, Yorkshire, Lancashire and Staffordshire. The steam-engine itself, adaptable to all manner of machines, was gradually perfected by Watt, and during the 'eighties was introduced in Sheffield, Leeds, Bradford, Manchester and other places. Watt's assistant, Murdoch, invented the method of using coal-gas for lighting purposes in the 'nineties.

During the same period the activity of the pottery district, Stoke-upon-Trent, Burslem, Newcastle-under-Lyne, etc., was being founded in a similar manner, machinery being applied from about 1760. In 1769 Josiah Wedgwood, one of a well-known pottery family, founded the famous works of Etruria, a name which he chose in memory of the ancient art of classical Italy, which he imitated in a new artistic fashion, known as 'Wedgwood cameos'; but Spode, of Stoke, about 1800, was both more original and more practical in his inventions. The china industries of Chelsea, Worcester and Derby became famous rather earlier, stimulated by the scarcity of imported china during the French war (1748—63) and by the rapid spread of tea drinking.

This universal creation of a *factory system* resulted in: (a) the separation of industrial from agricultural districts, and of work from home; (b) the collection of population in masses, leaving other regions half empty; (c) a great reliance on child labour, driving wages down to a very low level.

In some easy processes of spinning and weaving children had always helped, it was a family occupation. But now, to the factories of the north (Bradford, Manchester, Halifax, Huddersfield, Leeds, Wakefield, Macclesfield, etc.) the employers imported great numbers of little children. Parish overseers sent them as 'apprentices' from various places, but especially London, that they might earn their own living and cease to be chargeable upon the rates of the native place. The process is described in *Oliver Twist*. Early in the eighteenth century a kindly writer had urged that such poor children should be taught to read and write at the public cost. He observed that this need not lessen their industry; for they could be taught in their *spare* time, after they had earned their

keep, "since in England every child of five years [or four, as Defoe boasted] is able to earn its own bread in this prosperous and industrious country." The boast had been made already in the sixteenth and even in the fifteenth century. How many of the poor children survived was not asked. Not all masters of textile works can have been inhuman monsters, but certainly small children were kept at work for practically the whole of their waking life, and they were treated with increasing greed and cruelty as the eighteenth century went on, as the northern factories grew ever larger, competition increased, and the pressure of the poor rates became crushing in the small towns and country parishes of the south. Their masters housed them in sheds or barracks and fed them as cheaply as possible.

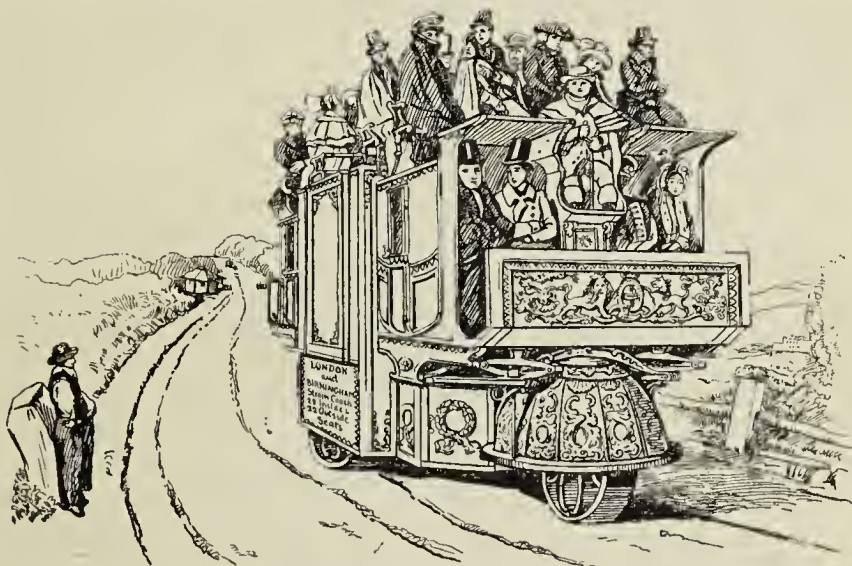
The wages of grown workmen were so small that they were obliged to take their wives and children to the mills, or the family could not earn enough to subsist on. Houses for these crowds of work-people, 'the hands,' as they now were called, were hastily erected by the mill-owners near the factories; there were no gardens or fields among them, and had there been any the 'hands' would have no time or strength to spend on them, for the hours of work were continually increased. The new towns were not hampered (as had been joyfully discovered in the seventeenth century) by the restrictions which in the Middle Ages had hampered employers in ancient boroughs. The owner of a mill in Lancashire or Yorkshire was also landlord of the houses, master of the 'apprentices,' and probably a local magistrate. He apparently had no more conception than some baron of the feudal age that he was taking an unfair advantage of his position. Not only he, but the whole of Society, including Parliament and ministers, now took it for granted that the production of goods was the sole end of existence for 'the hands,' and that they were 'wasting their time' and wasting the steam-engine or the water-fall if they left off work except for the few hours of sleep and eating which kept them alive and active.

This was the natural effect of the long rule of a materialistic political and social system. It is remarkable that the partial awakening of minds to larger and better ideas which we associate with the names of Chatham or Wesley did not turn them to oppose the accepted system and standards of life in which they had grown up. The patriotism of the minister and of the sailors and soldiers urged them to the greatest exertions within the accustomed framework of sordid politics which they felt powerless to alter. Religious teaching urged men to patience and resignation or to seek comfort in the thought of a future world. Religion was concerned with a purely spiritual sphere disconnected with the circumstances of bodily life.

(iii) TRANSPORT

The general prosperity of all parts of England in the middle of the eighteenth century put a great strain on the means of transport, which had sufficed for long ages, though there had always been goods to carry about and the English people had always been fond of travelling: even before Chaucer's time most were ready to risk limb or life travelling.

In Tudor and Stewart times this tendency developed, and now a great increase in the volume of commerce and in the intercourse of different districts with each other and the Continent demanded better ways and more vehicles.



A MECHANICAL STAGE-WAGON BETWEEN LONDON AND BIRMINGHAM,
DRIVEN BY STEAM (1832).

In the early part of the eighteenth century not only strings of pack-horses but carriers' waggons were always going to and fro conveying parcels, goods and the poorer class of traveller along the country roads, which in the fifteenth century were already old. By changing from cart to cart it was easy, if uncomfortable, to travel from Westmoreland or Yorkshire in a few days to London or Bristol. People of good position used their own conveyances: the 'family coach' was a proverb and a joke before the close of the century. People with money usually hired a chaise with 'post-boy' or postillion, from one of the innumerable inns which were the most noticeable buildings in town or village.

The waggon slowly developed into the daily or weekly stage-coach, which made its regular progress from stage to stage of its

route, while piecemeal improvements of roads provided what were practically through highways. They can most easily be traced on the modern great west route from London to Bristol, with its feeders on either hand; or in the Midlands, where the broad mediaeval tracks from town to town (perhaps as ancient as the tenth century) had gradually been improved by the corporations of the towns, or by prosperous squires and lords, into roads recognisably metalled; country roads were, of course, soft unmetalled lanes.

Northampton, Coventry, Leicester and Derby formed the grand junctions. From them radiated a number of ancient cross-roads, respectively directed towards Oxford (as the principal Thames crossing), Nottingham (the great crossing of Trent) and Shrewsbury or Worcester (for crossing the Severn). But in the eighteenth century these old roads of the Midlands had already begun to be deflected by the growth of Birmingham and its neighbours, leaving somewhat high and dry of local traffic—and the better able to serve through traffic—such old road junctions as Daventry and Southam, or Banbury, or Market Bosworth. Similarly, the north-west routes formerly connected with Watling Street had been long ago deflected by the greater importance of South Lancashire than Shropshire and especially by the rise of Liverpool, while fresh roads were required by the sudden growth of the West Riding towns.

Both Manchester and Sheffield, where through journeys to London began, had long been and always remained great junctions for coaches and waggons from the north.

Yorkshire takes an honourably early place in the annals of scientific road-building, owing to the achievements of that famous character, Blind Jack Metcalfe of Knaresborough. Metcalfe so completely overcame his infirmity as to become an unusually vigorous rider, hunter, traveller, horse-dealer and smuggler. He drove his own stage-coach between Knaresborough and York (1754), and mended that road so admirably that his advice was sought far and wide. Between 1765 and 1792 he had surveyed and rebuilt nearly 200 miles of roads and bridges in Yorkshire, Lancashire and Derbyshire.

But the greatest of the road-builders was Telford, who began as a poor apprentice of a Scottish country mason. After ten years' work and study in the local rebuilding in Eskdale and the magnificent buildings of Edinburgh 'new town' (about 1780), he betook himself to London, there quickly made his mark as a practical architect, surveyor, engineer and contractor, and next, as surveyor of public works for Shropshire, made that county the leading example in Great Britain of engineering achievement (1788–1800). He devised a new form of construction for bridges, with cast-iron plates, and his great main roads, Shrewsbury to Holyhead or Carlisle to Glasgow, were not only models of design but constructed with a solidity unknown since the Roman Empire.

Among Telford's achievements are the famous bridges and

aqueducts of Tewkesbury, Gloucester, Buildwas, Chirk, Pont-Cysylltan (over the Dee) and Glasgow, the harbours of Aberdeen, Dundee, Leith, Peterhead, and St. Katherine's docks by the Tower, the Ellesmere Junction canal and the vast Caledonian canal with its wonderful locks. This last, together with the series of fine roads in connection with it, which were driven all over the north of Scotland, he justly claimed to be "a working academy from which 800 men have annually gone forth improved workmen." The whole undertaking took some eighteen years and advanced the state of the Highlands, as he said, by at least a century : wheeled vehicles now took the place of women carriers, English ploughs made their first appearance, the energetic landowners and intelligent people seized on all the new opportunities and the brilliant period of Scottish farming and gardening opened.

It is curious that England was almost the latest among European countries to construct canals, but characteristic that a task which was undertaken (like the roads) in France and the Italian and German states by Governments was here accomplished by private enterprise and local authorities.

Manchester was the scene of the first practical canal, created by an eccentric duke and an illiterate mechanic in partnership. James Brindley, son of a small Derbyshire farmer, was known among his neighbours as an ingenious maker and mender of machinery. A local magnate introduced him to the Duke of Bridgewater, who consulted him on the possibility of making a canal from his coalpits at Worsley to Manchester. The River Irwell lay in the way, and Brindley carried the canal across the river by an aqueduct. A critic to whom he explained his plan contemptuously remarked that though he had often heard of 'castles in the air' he had never before been shown the site of one.

The experiment made such a heavy drain on the duke's resources that he took to living like a cottager and was called a miser, while Brindley's weekly salary was a guinea. When his success was seen he was asked to design the Manchester to Liverpool canal, which made possible the conveyance of large quantities of cotton and coal in spite of the difficult obstacle, Chat Moss, through which it had to be driven. Both Brindley and his greater successor, Telford, inspired by scientific zeal and public spirit, were almost indifferent to money.

1733. Kay's flying-shuttle.

1735. Coke-smelting adopted.

c. 1745. Sheffield silver-plating and steel-casting begins.

c. 1756. West India cotton supplies Lancashire.

1761. Bridgewater canal at Manchester.

1765. Hargreaves' spinning-jenny.

1769. Arkwright's spinning-frame (by water).

„ Watt's first steam-engine patent.

1770. Leeds and Liverpool canal begun.

- 1760-73. 452 Highway Acts.
- 1773. Spitalfields' Weavers Act (wages).
- 1776. Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.
- 1778. Watt and Boulton's steam-pump for mines.
- 1779. Crompton's 'mule.'
- 1786. Steam-power applied in Sheffield.
- 1786-7. Commercial treaty with France.
- 1787. Cartwright's power-loom.
- 1789. Steam-power applied in Manchester.
- 1792. Murdoch uses gas lighting.
- 1794. American cotton imported into Lancashire.

XXI

PITT

(PRIME MINISTER 1784-1801 and 1803-1805)

THE announcement in December 1783 that William Pitt had accepted office as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer was received by the public with a sigh of relief, but in the House of Commons with a roar of laughter. The public took it as a pledge of serious and honest government, the Whigs scoffed at the self-assurance of the young man of twenty-four and his knot of friends—"Children playing at ministers!" The King's ingenuity was felt to be excessively entertaining while quite unlikely to keep Charles Fox out of office for long. "Mr. Pitt may do what he likes during the holidays," laughed the fashionable Whig hostess, Mrs. Crewe, "but it will be only a mince-pie administration, depend upon it." The holidays, however, revealed an unusual enthusiasm in the public, which beheld in Pitt the worthy son of his revered father, and Whig contempt became allayed with some concern. Having a large majority in Parliament they did not wish for a dissolution, but assumed that Pitt would, of course, resign on being outvoted. Pitt coolly informed Fox that the majority in that House did not represent the voice of the nation, nor could the thunders of Fox and Burke or the gibes of Sheridan frighten him either into resignation or into revealing when a dissolution might be expected. By giving the Whigs three months to exhibit their methods he was giving time for public and royal opinion to become, not only convinced, but impassioned. The coalition of Fox and North had given so violent a shock to the belief in Party founded on Principle that with the general public Fox's name was no longer one to conjure with.

The Opposition passed resolutions condemnatory of the minister and reflecting plainly upon the sovereign; it defeated Pitt's India Bill, and threatened to suspend the annual votes for supplies and the Mutiny Bill. But when the Lords suddenly moved to the minister's support by a resolution condemning the conduct of the Commons, it was observed that Fox's majorities began to dwindle. Prudent members doubted his success in forcing Pitt to resign, and independent ones disapproved of the attempt to paralyse government for party purposes. Before the middle of March the Whig majority had dropped to one, the Mutiny Bill was duly passed,

and then Parliament was dissolved and appeal made to the nation.

Pitt, in truth, had very powerful support : he had the King and all the influence of the Crown ; he had Lord Chancellor Thurlow, foremost of the King's Friends, and Henry Dundas, the Advocate for Scotland, who had long pulled the strings of Scotch voters and who knew how to pull other strings, especially on the Admiralty and India Boards. Thurlow's position meant the practical control of the great legal interest. He was a treacherous self-seeker, but he had not yet been found out. Dundas had served under a succession of ostensible chiefs, but he was not accused of injuring his country or his departments and he now, in middle life, became the devoted supporter, personal and political, of the brilliant young Prime Minister, and shared his power, often too far for the public interest.

Pitt himself took office with all the earnestness and confidence which the Whigs had found so exasperating in his great father. To him, office was a sacred trust and England was his ideal and his religion. Though he had had only three years' experience in the Commons and only two of office, he had been educated from childhood by an adored and adoring father in the ways of the House and the rules of ministerial conduct till they had become a second nature. If he had none of that 'experience of life' so abundantly collected by Fox and his friends in the fashionable circles of London, Paris, Dublin or Gibraltar, what he had noted among the squires and peasantry of Somerset and Sussex, or the merchants and lawyers of London, might perhaps be equally instructive.

Already Pitt had studied the recent scientific works on the *Economy* of nations and had thought out the reforms which ought to be effected in the finance and commerce of England and the government of Ireland and India. Five years of peace, he declared, with his reforms, would enable England to face any nation in Europe.

In the elections of 1784 the influence of the Crown was no longer in North's hands, while the electors in the more open constituencies showed that they could free themselves from influence. One hundred and sixty former Whig members were turned out : "Fox's martyrs," they were promptly dubbed. The freeholders of Yorkshire, accustomed to the golden persuasions of Cavendishes or Wentworths, were won by a marvellous speech from Pitt's staunch friend, William Wilberforce.¹ In Middlesex, Wilkes enjoyed the triumph of being returned as the champion of the Crown.

But this triumph at the polls did not mean that the Prime Minister could control the House so far as to pass all his Bills. The popularly elected members exercised their right of voting in the

¹ "I saw what seemed a mere shrimp mount upon the table ; but, as I listened, he grew and grew until the shrimp became a whale."—Boswell, quoted in Rose, *Wm. Pitt and National Revival*, p. 170.

House as they thought proper, while Thurlow often directed the King's Friends to oppose the Premier, so that with their help the Whig Opposition frequently defeated Pitt. Though he is usually reckoned as the first modern *Prime Minister*, he was by no means absolute, even within the Cabinet; above all, he was obliged to consult the King on important points if he wanted the votes of the royal nominees.

FINANCE (1784-93)

Pitt's financial reforms took several years to accomplish and amounted to the erection of a new system, comprising a reversal of certain ancient principles as well as an actual economy in practice procured by simplification and supervision. His general principle was to advocate as much *freedom* in commerce as possible.

(a) He lowered so greatly the duties on articles apt to be smuggled as to make smuggling much less profitable. Tea, in particular, could now be sold openly so cheaply that the Dutch ceased to supply tea to smugglers. At the same time a better plan of coping with contraband traders was found: revenue officers watched the shore in small vessels and caught the smugglers at sea with their cargoes, instead of hunting them at a disadvantage on land.

(b) A great saving was effected by his *Consolidated Fund*, or pooling of the revenue. The existing customs or excise duties, in 1784, were a collection of the successive imposts and exemptions piled up for a century. Pitt substituted for this puzzling tangle a definite list of charges, and had customs, excise, and taxes all paid into one national fund. Then, out of this *Consolidated Fund* the interest on the National Debt and all other regular expenses were paid. So involved was the old system that it is stated that more than 3,000 resolutions had to be carried in the House to effect this reform. A number of old offices which had become sinecures were abolished and it became possible to audit and inspect the accounts so as to prevent many abuses. So lax had been the old system that it was possible (in 1783) for a collector in high place to have 'lost' £90,000 of the Scottish revenue and not to be obliged to account for it.

(c) Another change was a *Sinking Fund* (formerly tried by Walpole). Some money was left in the Bank of England to accumulate at compound interest so as to form a fund which was assigned to pay off the National Debt. To this fund Pitt added the surpluses of revenue, and by 1793 he had succeeded in paying off some eleven millions.

(d) The *Post Office* was turned into a revenue-earning department by skilful changes. Mail-coaches were employed which carried letters faster than private messengers could do, while they could earn part of the expense from passengers' fees. At the same time the privilege of *franking* (sending free) letters possessed by members

of Parliament was largely reduced. They had been used to sign quantities of envelopes beforehand, which could be obtained from their servants.

(e) For encouragement to commerce Pitt looked to more liberal understandings with other countries. He was able to put into partial practice the theory of 'free' trade advocated by Adam Smith, by negotiating a Commercial Treaty with France (1786). Each Government reduced the duties on the goods most largely purchased from the neighbour country. French wines and silks and English woollens and cloths could then, respectively, be sold more cheaply, and the lower price encouraged larger purchase. Above all Frenchmen and Englishmen were to travel and trade in the neighbour country without passports or fees or molestation on account of religion, and the Navigation restrictions were to be discarded. Pitt considered that an increased manufacture, *i.e.* larger employment, was procured better by this reciprocal agreement than by the ancient mode of paying bounties to manufacturers.

Unhappily the success which attended Pitt's financial measures was denied to his statesmanlike efforts for Irish reform, parliamentary reform, and abolition of the slave-trade, all of which involved large vested interests.

As to a reform of the House of Commons, Pitt was well aware of the opposition he must expect from owners of boroughs, and therefore only proposed to transfer seventy-two members from thirty-six close or decayed boroughs to the counties. He arranged for large compensation in money to the owners of pocket boroughs, whom he invited to give up their private constituencies voluntarily, from a sense of duty. But Burke easily stirred the devout affection of members for the English Constitution, which sanctified every parliamentary defect, and as no popular demand for such reform made itself evident, Pitt, after three efforts, all defeated, laid the scheme aside.

With regard to abolishing the trade in African slaves, Pitt was a pioneer in the sense that he first treated the question as one which might properly be included among practical politics.

Isolated protests against the traffic in African slaves were by no means a novelty. As early as 1712 a number of colonists in Virginia, Carolina and Georgia had become perturbed by the large number of negro slaves poured into North America and conceived the idea of abolishing the status of slavery. They appealed to the leading State of the Northern colonies, Pennsylvania, but received from the then Quaker Government at Philadelphia a definite negative:—"It is neither just nor convenient to set them free." Fifty years later a Quaker merchant of Philadelphia (alarmed by his own imagination that many thousands of slaves might escape into the wilds and join the Red Indians) wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury to suggest that the English Church should start a universal Christian movement against this dangerous iniquity.

Several philanthropic Evangelical leaders,¹ especially Granville Sharp, Zachary Macaulay, William Wilberforce, and Fowell Buxton, followed the example of John Wesley in condemning the trade as ungodly, and devoted their wealth and energies to organising a movement which should influence Parliament.

Pitt carried triumphantly through the Commons, and engineered with great difficulty through the Lords, the first successful check on the trade, Dolben's Bill for regulating the transport of slaves (1788). But to make further restriction a 'Government question,' as it would now be termed, would be to procure his own fall immediately. Already the City of London was apprehending the ruin of the West Indies, Bristol foresaw the destruction of the sugar and rum industries, and Liverpool was almost in riot. The King, who had been constrained to sanction the regulating Act before dissolving Parliament, was much amenable to the advice of his principal private favourite, Jenkinson, North's friend, and Jenkinson won in 1788 the undying gratitude of Liverpool by what its corporation termed his 'noble exertions' in opposing the tyrannical anti-slavery Bill.

In any case, the crusade for closing the trade in human cargoes could not but be suspended by a political crisis at court which nearly drove out Pitt, and next, by the European earthquake of the French Revolution.

The temporary political crisis at home was caused by the King's illness. In 1788 George III fell ill of a malady which after some months was acknowledged to have deprived him of his right senses. It was therefore necessary that the Prince of Wales should become Regent. No one disputed this, but the well-known politics and bad personal character of the Prince gave occasion for strong differences as to the method of Regency. The Prince of Wales was certain to replace Pitt by Fox. Besides, his unfilial conduct gave only too much ground for the belief that he would wield his power in such a way as to separate the King from the royal family, and to shut him up for ever as a hopeless lunatic. It was known that the Prince and Duke of York had openly rejoiced over their father's delirium and had inflicted slights and actual discomforts upon the Queen. The Prince and his friends declared that a man out of his mind could never recover and that the Regent must permanently replace him.

Pitt maintained that the Prince's natural claim to the Regency did not give him a legal right to assume it with full royal powers of his own motion. An Act of Parliament must confer it upon him and ought also to provide (*a*) for the personal security and good treatment of the demented King, and (*b*) for his resumption of the monarchical authority if he should recover. Certain limits, therefore, were by the Bill placed upon the Regent's powers for a short time. (*a*) The King's person and the royal household were to be entrusted

¹ Not, as is frequently stated, mostly Quakers, although the Society desired its members to avoid participating in the traffic.

to the care of the Queen ; (b) for three years the Regent must not create peers (except in the royal family) or bestow offices, pensions or reversions in perpetuity, but only 'during pleasure' ; so that the King, if he should recover, would not find his entire powers vanished.

The Whigs declared that the proposed restrictions were a base Tory intrigue, and they abused both Pitt and the Queen, but the restrictions would not hinder the Prince from changing the Ministry and Fox had already drawn up his list. Great were the Whig rejoicings as the Bill passed through the Commons ; fashionable ladies were wearing 'Regency caps' on their powdered heads (embellished with three tall feathers and a motto), and several of Pitt's colleagues had already deserted him, to curry favour with the new Ministry, when tidings that the King's health was improving were first whispered, then published ; very soon the announcement of his complete recovery enabled the House of Lords to lay the Bill aside (March 1789), while the whole of London testified its frantic joy by a universal illumination, even the poorest cobbler showing his farthing dip. Head-dresses immediately changed to loyal *bandeaux* of broad blue ribbon embroidered with *God Save the King* in every style from diamonds to gilt paper.

Not only had the general pity been profoundly stirred, but a very general disgust was aroused by the heartless conduct of the Prince and his brothers the Dukes of York and Cumberland, shamelessly exhibited in public.

On his recovery, the King manifested a disconcerting acuteness in finding out what had taken place during his illness, and from this time he accorded to Pitt a personal regard and firm support which promised to make him a permanent minister. The goodwill which henceforth was felt for George III by the majority of the nation, together with the general sense of security under the rule of Pitt, went far to cement the nation in unity of feeling just at the time when the most volcanic disruptive force seen in Europe since the Reformation burst forth in the French Revolution.

XXII

POLITICAL REVOLUTION IN IRELAND. THE UNION OF 1801 GEORGE III (1760-1820)

ALREADY, under George II, the Whig ascendancy in its palmiest days had sowed the seeds of Irish rebellion. The earliest exploits of that Lord George Sackville who was destined to act the part of 'second villain' in the American drama had been exhibited in Ireland, where, as Chief Secretary (1751-6) under his father, Lord Lieutenant, "he first provoked the Irish to *think*"¹ by the abominable corruption of his subordinates. Even the Irish House of Commons was stung to action by this gang of plunderers, and, led by the patriotic Grattan, began to ask questions on the Civil List and the Pension List and to agitate in both England and Ireland for a repeal of the laws which strangled Irish manufactures and commerce.

Nor had this unwonted spirit been allayed when the fiery orator, Flood, began to agitate against the English political supremacy and accustomed the House and all Dublin to hear eloquent claims for, at least, an Irish control of Irish taxation. All this was the work of the protestant Anglo-Irish, who alone wielded any political power, and Lord North, partly to cultivate popularity with the rest of the population, had directed the Irish Government to repeal a number of the Acts which penalised the Roman-catholics (1778). Thenceforth they were socially on an equality with the Protestants.

Nothing, however, was accomplished as to commerce till the American Revolution caused the Government to send across the Atlantic most of the troops then on foot in both England and Ireland.

The sympathy of the mass of the population, whether Romanist (in the south) or Presbyterian (in the north), was naturally with the Americans. But when France allied herself with America and made open war, the Ulstermen felt alarm at the possibility of French invasion, or raids by Paul Jones. They asked for protection, and when none arrived from either London or Dublin they prepared to defend themselves (1779). A patriotic nobleman of high character, Lord Charlemont, took the lead in raising *Volunteers*. In a few months 60,000 men were training and arming.

The Volunteers were sincerely loyal and patriotic; but there was no

¹ Horace Walpole.

possibility of resisting or discouraging them. No French invaders appeared; but Charlemont's friend, Henry Grattan, the noblest of Ireland's recorded patriots, perceived a legitimate use to be made of these gallant and determined men. While they were guarding the streets of Dublin Grattan demanded in Parliament freedom of trade for Ireland. The claim was seconded by Flood (Grattan's rival) and could be supported by all parties. Soon Grattan led the entire House of Commons in procession through the streets to present their petition to the Lord Lieutenant. "England has sown her laws like dragon's teeth," cried a member, "and they have sprung up in armed men." The Irish now began to imitate American example, and refused to purchase English goods so resolutely that English merchants found their orders falling off.

The Lord Lieutenant warned North that there was no resisting the unanimous resolve; in London, Shelburne in the Lords and Burke in the Commons advocated the claims of their fellow-countrymen, and North eventually carried Bills to repeal a number of the statutes which had choked Irish commerce (1779). Ireland was now free to import and export with foreign countries and the colonies, but not with Britain. Grattan's next step was one of gratitude to the Ulstermen whose constancy had procured this boon for Ireland, and the protestant Dissenters were officially relieved of political restrictions—forty-eight years earlier than in England.

It was clear that the next move would be to free the Irish Parliament from English control, and Grattan had spoken in the Commons of this intention when North, with a folly which proved him as incapable as the King of learning from events, proceeded to inflict on the Irish Parliament an insult which gave the strongest spur to its resolution. The English Cabinet (1780) altered the habitual Mutiny Bill—which was triennial in Ireland—so as to make it permanent and thus to enable the Lord Lieutenant to avoid calling the Irish Parliament together.

In spite of all the efforts of Grattan and his friends the Lord Lieutenant and the Castle officials had a hold over so large a number of members as to pass the Act through the Dublin Parliament (1781).

But the victory of France and America procured victory also for Ireland. The Rockingham Government acted up to its principles (1782) and repealed in the English Parliament the *Act of the Sixth of George I.* All that remained was for the Irish Parliament to repeal Poyning's Act, and it was then by law entirely freed from English ministerial control.

For the next eighteen years (1783–1801) the Crown was the sole acknowledged link between the two islands. But the government of Ireland only lay still more perfectly in the hands of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy, who disposed of rotten boroughs and exploited

the finances with even more effrontery than their fellow Whigs in England, so that successive Lord Lieutenants had to bargain with them more than before.

To simplify political management, the system, long since notorious, of *undertakers* prevailed. The English Ministry ruled through either the Lord Lieutenant or the Lords Justices and they (always known as 'the Castle') ruled through a knot of men of the Ponsonby, Beresford and other family connections, who, having once obtained their own price, then by corruption or intimidation procured obedient majorities in the Houses.

Naturally it was in vain that Grattan urged the extension of the franchise to the Romanists, or that Flood agitated for a reform of the House of Commons. The volunteers became excited, they too demanded reform and held a political congress of their own; but confidence in their fairness and discipline waned rapidly; with the close of the war in 1783 the Crown could again bring forces to Ireland; and so, with the grand exception of commerce, Grattan and his followers still missed their ultimate object.

So hopelessly was the corrupt rule of the Castle and the great families now riveted on Ireland, that Grattan sought election to the English Parliament, in the hope that by drawing closer the union with England the Irish people as a whole might win from English justice what they could not extort from aristocratic tyranny in Ireland.

With the end of the war William Pitt had become Prime Minister, and he was by no means blind either to the misery of Ireland or the danger which might arise therefrom to England. An independent Ireland might well become a foothold for an enemy, if unconciliated. He wished to see the two islands one kingdom with one joint Parliament for their common concerns, "though, for local concerns, under distinct legislatures." He could not hope to accomplish so tremendous a measure immediately, so he attempted to equalise commercial conditions first (1785). 3

Ireland, indeed, occupied a prominent place in Pitt's commercial policy. He considered that of the actual ills of that country the worst was the squalid poverty of the major part of the population, and that this was in great measure due to the suppression of its manufactures and commerce by the English Parliament in times past. Pitt regarded such old conventional selfishness as obsolete and believed that England could afford a fair and even generous partnership to Ireland, such as had been extended to Scotland in 1707. But Irish commerce could not be treated in isolation: British opinion and imperial safety must be considered, lest Ireland, already independent in her legislature, might, with freed commerce, imitate the American colonies by seceding.

Pitt, then, drew up a scheme very much like a treaty to lay before the Irish Parliament, containing a stipulation that if the Irish Customs duties on the free trade offered should cause the Irish

revenue to rise above a certain figure, the surplus should be applied to the Imperial Navy. To this clause the Irish Parliament added—"if the revenue was not exceeded by the expenditure." As the Irish treasury easily could, and no doubt always would, find fresh objects for expenditure, this qualification abolished Pitt's safeguard. It was not his aim to increase the wealth of the great governing families, but to benefit the agricultural and industrial classes and secure some benefit to the joint naval forces from the increased trade.

Unhappily England and Scotland proved even more inimical than the Irish Parliament. The Union of 1707 had been negotiated by the nobility; commerce had since then risen to power. The East India Company and other companies, the textile manufacturers, the potteries, the shippers, artisans and employers alike, in every industrial district, agitated and petitioned against the 'ruin of English manufactures' which would be sure to result from any admission of Irish goods, made by cheap Irish labour. London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Bristol and half a hundred other great towns professed themselves as much terrified by the thought of the competition of poverty-stricken, unskilled Ireland as in 1688 London had been by the thought of an Irish regiment. Pitt was obliged to modify his proposals to a far less generous scale in order to get them through the House. Hereupon Fox discovered a fresh clue for opposing the concessions which remained. He accused Pitt of risking the ruin of English commerce in order to shackle Ireland in English fetters: "I," he declaimed, "will not barter English commerce for Irish slavery!" The meaningless phrase was taken up eagerly in the Dublin Parliament and the scheme had to be abandoned (1785).

So great a disappointment naturally embittered all sections of the Irish, and the manner of its expression was, as usual, by local riots and feuds amongst neighbours. Already within the bounds of Ulster protestant and romanist peasantry were murdering each other: the former were nicknamed 'Peep o' Day boys,' the latter, 'Defenders.' In Dublin, riots took the form of stabbing soldiers or assaulting shopkeepers accused of selling English goods. In the southern counties the peasantry were themselves terrorised by the farmers, landowners and agents, who, frenzied by their own fears, turned out in gangs to defend themselves and enlisted in their service ruffians who during the night raided houses and farmsteads, tortured unpopular persons, mutilated cattle and perpetrated all manner of vileness. These ruffians were known as *Whiteboys*. They had originated some twenty years earlier, in desperate protest against the enclosing of open land by the landowners and the turning of cultivated farmland into sheep-walks.¹ The activity of the Volunteers had lately kept down such disorders,

¹ Thus, in England *Enclosing* meant cutting vast open stretches into paddocks, but in Ireland, throwing small tilled plots into private grass-land.

but the Volunteers were now disbanding and although, after the peace of 1783, troops were again sent to Ireland, they were so mis-managed as to be useless for maintaining order.

At this point a fresh opportunity was offered to political intrigue by the insanity of George III (1788) and a fresh incentive given to popular violence by the news of the French Revolution (1789-90).

The debates in the English Parliament over Pitt's Regency Bill (1788-9) gave the Irish Houses the chance of flouting Pitt and flattering the Prince of Wales by an invitation to assume the Regency over Ireland without restrictions. The Address was carried to London by an enthusiastic party, headed by an uncle of Fox, but it arrived only to learn from the joy-bells and illuminations that the King had recovered.

George III, then, had been vividly reminded that Irish Whigs were hand-in-glove with the Fox-ite Whigs whom he abhorred, and he directed the Castle authorities to punish or bribe a majority to obedience once more : this, of course, still further increased the weight of taxation, and obviously for corrupt purposes.

Such flagrant corruption increased the indignation of the patriotic few in Ireland, the fetters on commerce galled others, the Roman-catholics sought political rights, and the brilliant object lesson provided by France (1789) encouraged all Irishmen to hope that a vigorous joint effort might secure their respective objects. An organisation to work for these objects, the society of 'United Irishmen,' was formed by Wolfe Tone, a young lawyer with political ambitions, and Napper Tandy, a protestant merchant of Dublin. Their first effort was brilliantly successful : Pitt and Dundas, Fox and Burke listened to their appeal for justice to the Roman-catholics, especially as their spokesman was Burke's son, and Pitt caused the Irish Government to carry an Act to relieve them from the worst of their legal disabilities. This Act repealed (early in 1792) all the old statutes which forbade Romanists to intermarry with Protestants, to educate their children, keep schools, enter the legal profession, or take apprentices. It was carried through the Dublin Parliament by an alliance of the Government with Grattan and his little band of reformers, in spite of the opposition of the great families.

The Romanists, however, still remained unable to hold any office, or bear arms or vote at parliamentary or municipal elections, and so were politically dependent on the goodwill of the protestant section. Their next agitation, therefore, was to obtain these concessions, in which they were supported by the Ulster members of the 'United Irishmen' because (being at that time republican in sentiment), they desired an electorate without royalist or English Church sympathies.

Again Pitt endorsed their appeal and again the Government carried through the Irish Parliament a relieving Act (1793) which gave Romanists, though only those who would take an oath of

allegiance, the right of holding almost all offices, including the military, and of voting in local parliamentary elections. But only the well-to-do might possess arms. At the same time several Acts were carried by the Ministry for reducing corruption and extravagance and for giving to the Government fresh powers of *coercion* to check the growing disorder in the country.

The great families of the protestant interest pointed to this rapidly increasing disorder as proof of the incapacity of the Irish and Roman-catholic population for using liberty. In fact, the masses of the peasantry—whether Romanist or Protestant—were by no means controlled by the respectable classes, and those weapons which by law they might not possess they somehow procured and used to attack each other in gangs. Murder and anarchy reigned in many counties. Wolfe Tone endeavoured to allay the hate of the factions, Napper Tandy to turn them against the Government. Both corresponded with the French Republic (1793–4), which now was at war with Great Britain, and though the Government discovered the treason brewing and allowed the two leaders to escape to America, Irish assistance for a French invasion had already been arranged for. Knowing this, and believing that the best way of securing loyalty lay in redressing injustice, Pitt prepared to grant still more fully the claims of the Irish Romanists (1795).

(ii) PITT'S UNION

The twofold curse of Ireland had for centuries been that its English rulers were always entangled by political intrigue in London, while native patriots or rebels always depended on the politics of some foreign Government. Pitt's attempts at Irish reform proved to be no exception. Already his economic measures had been lopped by the commercialism of the House of Commons; his second effort, the political enfranchisement of the Roman-catholics, was ruined by the Whig aristocracy. Pitt and the new Tory party had now been joined by 'the Portland Whigs'—those led by Burke, Windham, Lord Fitzwilliam and the Duke of Portland, and not by Charles Fox. They were known advocates of the enfranchisement and persistent claimants, as ever, of great office for their leaders. Pitt thought that the Lord Lieutenancy would satisfy Lord Fitzwilliam¹ and that he could carry the enfranchisement in the Irish Houses. But there were difficulties of that personal kind which always loomed so large in Whig politics. The ruling Lord-Lieutenant would have to be removed, *i.e.* given another post as good. This took some time to perform, and Fitzwilliam could not hold his tongue over his own coming greatness and splendid policy.

The secret was out at once, and while the self-important Earl was confiding to Grattan and the Ponsonbys what promotions and

¹ He was the nephew of the dead Marquis of Rockingham and inherited both his wealth and self-esteem.

dismissals he intended, the Fitzgibbons, Beresfords, and others who were to be sacrificed were organising a protestant resistance (1794). They were cleverer than the Fitzwilliam party, and applied directly to headquarters, to the King himself, by the medium of the wily English Lord Chancellor, Lord Loughborough (Wedderburn).

George III, ever since his mental illness of 1788, was apt to be a prey to sudden changes of mind and temper, and one of these revulsions took place over the Irish-catholic question. He had but just endorsed Pitt's generous, if impulsive, proposal to found a royal college for Irish priests near Dublin—Maynooth, when Loughborough brought him to regard the admission of Roman-catholic members to Parliament as a breach of his coronation oath to maintain the Church of England. He was always only too consistent in treating parliamentary politics as a system which, like a game of skill, possessed rules of its own.

When, then, Fitzwilliam's appearance in Dublin as Lord Lieutenant (1795) was signalised by a series of dismissals, the ejected betook themselves to England and appealed personally to the King and the Cabinet.

Pitt and his Whiggish allies were all disgusted with the folly of Fitzwilliam, whose haste and rudeness were in flat breach of his instructions. They rebuked their nominee and the King desired him to be recalled, a step constitutionally quite within the competence of the sovereign. But the recall of Fitzwilliam made it clear to the Irish that the reform on which they had counted was to be denied, and the departing nobleman gratified his peculiar sense of dignity by leaving behind him a written charge of breach of faith on the part of the English Ministry, which further inflamed the general rage.

The question of enfranchising Roman-catholics, in fact, involved the two tangled questions of tithe and education. All holdings of land were, of course, from ancient times, subject to payment of tithe; this, from Tudor days, was paid solely to the legal (protestant) incumbents. They collected it through deputies, or 'tithe-proctors,' and the peasantry, who voluntarily supported their own priests, felt the forcible exaction of tithe for the protestant rector, usually an absentee, to be a cruel injustice. The landlords had actually encouraged this attitude, themselves grudging support for the clergy. All public provision of education had long been restricted to protestant teachers and pupils, the Irish had gone abroad, or been taught here and there by courageous priests. But now that the French revolutionaries had closed the seminaries of France and Belgium the Irish had no training available for their young clergy. To open Irish colleges and endowments to the proscribed and probably peasant-born romanist clerics seemed to the great families unbearably degrading.

The long-expected Irish rebellion did not break out till 1798, though a French invasion was arranged by the Directory in 1796, on

the representations made first by Wolfe Tone and then by Lord Edward Fitzgerald, a younger son of the Duke of Leinster and endowed with all the charm and courage and incompetence of his fatal and romantic lineage.

This was the well-planned, well-furnished expedition of General Hoche, which failed only because, though most of the French ships duly reached Bantry Bay, the ship which carried the gallant Hoche himself was blown far out to sea and no one else dared to assume command. Next year Tone and Hoche once more attempted invasion, but the Dutch fleet which was to cover it either could not or would not start in time and was destroyed by Duncan off Camperdown (1797).

The Irish government after Fitzwilliam's recall was in the hands of the usual 'protestant ascendancy,' the great families had the new Lord Lieutenant, the Marquis of Camden (son of the eminent Judge), in their hands, and exerted over the whole country a rule of terrorism which drove to desperation all other classes of the population. The natural result was an anarchical outbreak known as the Irish Rebellion of 1798. It was all the worse because the lords and squires, knowing themselves to be, as it were, seated on a smouldering volcano, had everywhere asked for military protection and small parties of soldiers had been scattered as garrisons in villages or country houses up and down the island. It was not difficult, therefore, for the desperate peasantry to surround and massacre many of them.

In the end the risings were repressed by executions as cruel and indiscriminate as the outrages.

From 1798 Pitt could see only one cure—a Union of Ireland with Great Britain. This he believed would amalgamate the two races, despite religious strife, in a unity of self-interest, culture and politics, just as Scotland and England had been united. It would surely be thought safe to give equality to Roman-catholics when merged in the British protestant majority. The only cure for the corrupt and incompetent ascendancy of the Anglo-Irish great families was to destroy it; scattered among the more respectable British nobility they too would become innocuous. English capital would then flow to Ireland and provide manufactures to employ the population, and with prosperity grievances would die. Such was Pitt's vision. The idea of such a Union had been already from time to time discussed in pamphlets. The loss of the American colonies had made the thoughtful reflect on the advantages of unity, and French attempts to seize Ireland as a base of attack on England strengthened the arguments.

The main difficulty in the way of a Union was the difficulty which always blocked reform in Ireland. Whether regarded as temporary or permanent, as a constitution or a tyranny, the Irish Parliament was master of the political situation. Unless it passed the Act which decreed its own abolition the Union would not be legal.

Who could imagine that two Houses which never regarded aught but their own interests would now abdicate from pure public spirit? Every Act passed through that Parliament had given occasion for bribery, whether of the few or the many. In the case of the Act of Union doubtful voters gleefully found themselves courted by both the Government and the Opposition. The Opposition proffered sums up to £5000 for a vote against the Union and the Government had to outbid.

After 1798 Camden had to be withdrawn and a fresh Lord Lieutenant found, no mere professional politician, but a man of character, courage and experience. Lord Cornwallis, the staunch defender of Yorktown, had accepted the onerous post as a duty laid on his loyalty. It proved even more humiliating than he had foreseen. His threefold task was to mitigate the severity of the punishment dealt out to the recent rebels, to explain to the Romanists that the projected Union offered them better prospects, and to procure a majority for the measure in the two Houses. The first instruction, which he steadily carried out, branded him in the eyes of the protestant ascendancy as a dupe of sentiment who was encouraging a mob to slaughter them.

The second was achieved with less difficulty. No promises were pledged, for Pitt was careful to state no more than that, when the suitable time came, it would be much easier to enfranchise the Roman-catholics in the United Parliament than in the Irish Houses. This the leaders of that party well understood, and they were also offered some provision for their clergy, if they would admit a royal right of veto on bishops appointed, to which they agreed, nobody inquiring what the ecclesiastical view might be. They were given to understand that Pitt intended both measures as early as possible, and they certainly expected that the 'Relief' would follow the Union at once.

Cornwallis' third task resolved itself into a simple but costly process of purchase, of which nobody but himself felt ashamed. "I despise and hate myself every hour for engaging in such dirty work," wrote the chivalrous, unhappy soldier, "supported only by the reflection that without a Union the British Empire must be dissolved."

The purchase price of members of the Irish Parliament included forty-eight peerage honours, innumerable salaried posts, and £1500 apiece for every extinguished borough, nor could the good faith of the purchased be relied on. One peer (Downshire) "who is not personally corrupt" obtained over £52,000 and then proceeded to induce the body of militia under his command to petition against the Union. It was natural that Dublin should resent its loss of importance, though Pitt intended to preserve the Viceregal court and castle as magnificently as possible—a tacit admission that Ireland could not be to Great Britain as Scotland to England. But a storm of opposition to the Union was suddenly manifested by all sections of a population which had never agreed in anything else.

Pitt had not reckoned with the peculiar faculty of Irishmen for maintaining two opposed and mutually destructive arguments at once. The families who called themselves the English garrison, and demanded military protection for their property, plumed themselves also on their independence of Great Britain and their power of thwarting the British Government; several were even ready to raise a rebellion against the Union. The populace which cursed the members of Parliament for heretics and tyrants cried out also (as they have ever since) that the abolition of that Parliament was a new enslavement of Ireland. And all classes agreed (and ever since have held) that the iniquity of a bribed legislature was the crime of him alone who offered, not of those who pocketed bribes. Pitt, Cornwallis and the Lord Lieutenant's Chief Secretary, Lord Castlereagh, who dealt out the money, are still frequently spoken of as if they were responsible for the high-priced consciences of the Irish Parliament.

The political provisions of the Union decreed that Ireland should be represented in the United Parliament by four bishops (sitting in rotation), twenty-eight peers (elected for life), and one hundred members in the House of Commons (two for each of the thirty-two counties and for Dublin and Cork, one apiece to thirty-one cities and boroughs and the University of Dublin). In proportion to population or wealth Ireland secured a larger representation than Scotland or England. Irish peers, also, were still to be eligible for election to the House of Commons in England.

In commerce complete equality was to subsist.

The financial arrangement assigned to each country the charge of its own National Debt, while of the joint expenditure of the United Kingdom Ireland was to furnish two-fifths.

The Established Church and the Courts of Justice remained unaltered in Ireland, so did the oath prescribed for members of Parliament, which automatically excluded Roman-catholics, in the first United Parliament. The Union came into legal being on the 1st January, 1801, when George III was proclaimed 'King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland,' and the new *Union Jack* displayed the Cross of St. Patrick blent with the old Union Jack of England and Scotland.

Pitt next brought again before the Cabinet the matter of satisfaction of the Roman-catholic claims, which he had already considered with them without much effect. There was disagreement, fomented by Lord Loughborough, and no proposition had yet been formulated when the King began to talk of the subject in his ancient style: "I shall reckon any man my personal enemy who proposes such a measure."

It was not yet held unconstitutional in the sovereign if he declined following every step of his Prime Minister, while his *coronation oath* had with George III become almost an item of religious mania. His agitation, in fact, brought on a fit of insanity, brief, but cata-

strophic to Pitt and his confidants, whose position depended wholly upon the King. Pledged as he was to the enfranchisement, Pitt perceived that he was unable to coerce his sovereign and had in honour no choice but to resign.

His resignation afforded no comfort to the Irish Romanists, who could only feel that they had been duped. It should be clearly recognised that there was no solution of this knot; no precaution could have enabled Pitt to checkmate the King. It is not even necessary to make Loughborough a scapegoat; George was always a match for intrigue.

XXIII

EFFECT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

AN event of such magnitude as the Revolution in France was bound to have a powerful effect here, far beyond that of cutting short Pitt's programme of reform, for the whole of our previous history had constantly shown how strongly French movements influenced the English.

"We conquered France, but felt our victim's charms,"

was the way in which the eighteenth century liked to think of it.

The great European struggle about to open was at bottom a contest of ideas. Throughout the eighteenth century the power of abstract thought had been remarkably direct. Locke had really animated the reforms of the Williamite Whigs and Adam Smith those of Pitt. So too, on the Continent, the terse profundity of Montesquieu¹ laid the foundation of the critical and idealist philosophy afterwards built up by Voltaire which penetrated all Western Europe. To the economists and philosophers of Paris were indebted several eminent English propagandists of new thought—Hume, Gibbon and Adam Smith. On the other hand, both Montesquieu and Voltaire had personally studied English life and drawn from English sources. The former had extolled "the liberty and equality of London," the latter "the free thought and free speech of England." The third inspirer of revolution, Rousseau, did not visit England until after the publication of his most famous works (*Le Contrat Social*, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, and *Émile*, 1760–62). Voltaire was the destructive satirist, Rousseau the sentimentalist, of the coming Revolution in France.

Both criticism and sentiment had blossomed rather earlier in England, where satire, with the pen of Pope, had vanquished sentiment, or driven it to its last refuge of unreadable novels. But Rousseau first popularised for Europe the cult of the *Child of Nature*, the *Simple Life*, generosity, love, impulse, *fraternity*, and all the more gushing emotions. Already Sheridan could laugh: "There is nothing in the world so noble as a man of *sentiment*"²; nor did anyone recollect that 'Liberty and Equality' had been born in London. It was, indeed, frequently asserted that from the United States had travelled these principles, discovered brand-new by that republic.

¹ Montesquieu died 1755. *Esprit des Lois*, 1748.

² *School for Scandal*, 1777. [Sentiment still meaning Feeling.]

The news of the meeting of the States-General at Paris, in 1789, was received with strong sympathy in England, for it was supposed that with a parliamentary constitution France would become a prosperous, modernised, and therefore no doubt a peaceable and friendly State. But the startling proceedings of the deputies, their wholesale confiscations and abolitions, and above all the secularisation of the Church and travesty of religion, soon altered sympathy to apprehension. This was seen in the English Parliament by the increased majorities against Pitt's reform proposals and by the sudden break-up of the Whig party after a hundred years of solidarity.

Charles Fox, in 1789-90, spoke with the same admiration of the French Revolution as before of that in America. Though in 1786 he had attacked Pitt for concluding his commercial treaty with "our natural enemy," from 1792 he maintained that only the House of Bourbon had been our enemy, a republican France would "naturally" be friendly. Events promptly falsified his forecast, yet he continued to be the spokesman in Parliament on behalf of the French revolutionaries. Burke, on the contrary, uttered fierce denunciations. Pointing, in the summer of 1790, to their record of destruction without construction, to the riots and executions and the power wielded by Paris mobs, he declared that such a beginning could never lead to a constitution, or to justice or peace, but only to a military tyranny. The French, he told the House of Commons, had "shown themselves the ablest architects of ruin that had hitherto existed in the world. In that very short space of time they had completely pulled down to the ground their monarchy, their church, their nobility, their law, their revenue, their army, their navy, their commerce, their arts and their manufactures."

A month or two later he published his famous pamphlet: *Reflections on the French Revolution*. It was a fiery and eloquent attack on the principles and actions of the leaders in the great upheaval. Contrasting them with the political achievements of England in 1688, Burke appealed to the national sense of justice and patriotism to resist the crudity and cruelty of French *Jacobinism*.¹

Burke was answered by Thomas Paine, that English author and democrat who had gone to America and made a name by his pamphlet in favour of the Republic—*Common-sense*. His new book, *The Rights of Man*, is more famous, being not only a defence of France but an attack upon England.

Burke in the *Reflections*, as in all his writings, had mingled controversy with deeper wisdom, hitching (as it were) temporary politics to eternal axioms of policy and humanity. Paine's method was rather to assume that any instance with which he was dealing was a sample of permanent conditions. After lauding America and defending France, in *The Rights of Man, Part I*, he published a separate *Part II*, in which the English Government and King

¹ The *Jacobin Club* was the most violent and bloodthirsty party in Paris and it obtained control of the government.

George III were violently attacked. His history was wildly incorrect, his philosophy and logic were full of fallacies, but the semi-educated readers who devoured his book took all for gospel. What told most in it was the truth in some of his personal attacks. It was true that the great noble families in England had absorbed a large share of the national wealth, that they had endowed their families with sinecures and pensions, practically "out of the taxes"; and that they retained the power of government in their own hands by reducing the House of Commons to an echo of themselves. His vehement abuse of these features of Burke's beloved *Constitution* certainly illustrated Burke's assertion that 'French principles' would spread, and seriously alarmed the governing and propertied classes.

But there were clearer thinkers than Paine who also believed that in the French Revolution they saw the dawn of a political system which would give justice and prosperity to the masses of this nation. Some of them were well-known men, especially the scientific researcher Dr. Priestley, of Birmingham, and Dr. Price, a leading nonconformist minister in London. Political clubs were formed to correspond with the leaders in Paris, the *London Corresponding Society*, the *Constitutional Society*, and the members of these clubs were often men less intelligent and still more ignorant than Paine. Many enthusiastic young men believed that a new era was opening when mankind would really be inspired by the noble ideals proclaimed by the French, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." Among them were Coleridge, Southey and Wordsworth, Shelley and Byron.

Pitt, however, regarded the political experiments of France as being solely her own concern and he continued to count upon peace, even to the point of further reducing the Army. It was unwelcome to him that foreigners, including the French refugees in England and Germany, should suppose that Burke's *Reflections* expressed the views of Government or foreshadowed Great Britain's ill-will to the new French Government, which in 1792 had formally become republican. But the choice of peace or war did not rest with Pitt: events on the Continent moved rapidly and Great Britain could not avoid being drawn into the vortex of the whirlpool.

In France, men of great ability and determination instinctively grouped themselves in parties, which for four years (1790-4) pursued a similar career: as soon as one group had seized power and begun a definite policy a more violent group attacked it, sent it to the guillotine, and began a more extreme policy.

In the meantime, the refugee nobles (*émigrés*) who collected at Coblenz or Brussels were concocting schemes for an aristocratic conquest of France to be accomplished for them by German armies. Many of the small German potentates sympathised with them and dreaded the effect of French example on their own subjects. The revolutionary French government forestalled them by declaring war on the Emperor Francis II, who had just succeeded the prudent Leopold II. French armies not only repulsed a half-hearted German

invasion in Lorraine, but assailed the Austrian Netherlands and the Alpine frontier of Italy. By the victory of Jemappes (November 1792) Dumouriez obtained the mastery of Belgium. In the same month the little country of Savoy, all important for the passes of the Alps, was forcibly annexed, as well as Nice, the coastal frontier city of Italy. And as soon as the weak German army was withdrawn, after the cannonade of Valmy, the French made a triumphal march along the Rhine, taking city after city without resistance.

The truth was that the Emperor Francis II did not want to fight France. He was bent on annexing more territory for his family, preferably in Italy, while the King of Prussia, who had expected "a short and glorious war" ending at Paris, was now intent on the Second Partition of Poland (1793). Neither intended to expend troops in France for the sake of helpless dukes and bishops on the Rhine. Moreover, neither French nor Germans intended to be bound by old-fashioned convention to respect unarmed places or weak princes simply because they were neutral.

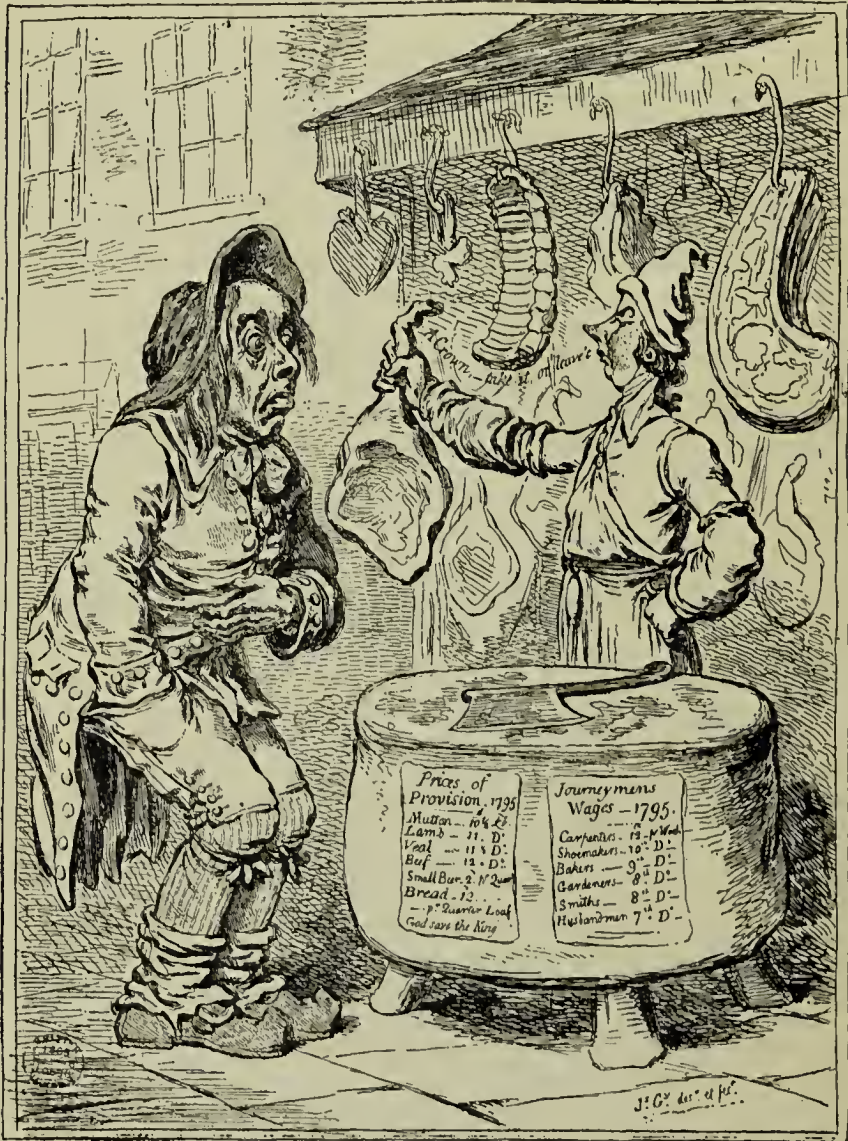
As soon as the French held Belgium (to give the Austrian Netherlands their modern name) they announced the opening of the estuary of the Scheldt, up which a French man-of-war sailed to Antwerp (1792). Republican France regarded past treaties as having vanished with the monarchy which had made them, and Europe as a blank political slate awaiting her new schemes. The Convention issued a decree (November 1792) promising 'fraternity' and help to all peoples 'acquiring their liberty,' *i.e.* revolting against their governments. It ordered its generals to 'revolutionise' the countries they entered, and began to spread propaganda by agents and pamphlets in German and Italian principalities, England, Holland, Sweden and other countries.

It was this conquest by France of Belgium and the Scheldt estuary which forced the English Cabinet to action. Only four years earlier the Emperor Joseph II, then sovereign of Belgium, had informed the world that the old treaties which gave a monopoly of that channel to Holland, and so closed the port of Antwerp, were obsolete and that he intended his Belgian subjects to use it. But he had been notified, by a Triple Alliance of England, Holland and Prussia, that he must not by himself set aside a European treaty, and as he had no intention of fighting he had yielded.

It was, then, most unlikely that Great Britain under George III would tolerate a militant France in possession of the ports opposite the Thames; it was a threat which had provoked her to war from Edward I to George II. Pitt paid no attention to the proffers made by French messengers (one of whom was the subsequently famous Talleyrand) of a rich island or two in the Indies as the price of neutrality, but informed the Dutch Stadtholder that if he was attacked Great Britain would stand to her guarantees.

Hereupon France declared war on both Holland and England (February 1793).

Ten days earlier Louis XVI had been executed, as a deliberate threat to all sovereigns : “ Let us fling them as a gage the head of



The BRITISH-BUTCHER,
Supplying JOHN-BULL with a Substitute for BREAD

CARICATURE BY GILLRAY (1795).

a king,” cried Danton. And as the Spanish ambassador made an official protest from his Government they declared war also upon Spain.

XXIV

THE FIRST WAR

(A) THE BEGINNING

PITT was bitterly disappointed by the outbreak of war and tried to console himself by thinking it would be a *short war*. He was always optimistic to excess and could hardly be convinced by events that his ideals were impossible to attain. In fact the 'revolution war' lasted for twenty-two years with barely one year's pause in the middle.

Three periods may be distinguished :—

(1) The war of the First and Second Coalitions, 1793–1801, closed by the Peace of Amiens, 1801–2.

(2) The war of 1803–14 against Napoleon, closed by the First Peace of Paris, Napoleon's retirement to Elba, and the beginning of the Congress of Vienna.

(3) The 'Hundred Days' or war of Waterloo, 1815, closed by the Second Peace of Paris and those treaties of Vienna which outlined the political framework of Europe for nearly a century.

Pitt, unhappily, devised a definite war system which he imagined to be a copy of his father's and therefore perfect. On this plan Great Britain was to fight at sea; her 'natural' allies must be both Prussia and Austria, who would attack France with land armies to be partly paid by Great Britain.

This theory was largely responsible for the length of the war. It ignored the fact that Austria and Prussia were more jealous of each other than of any open foe. It assumed that they would, of course, expend the lavish British subsidies entirely upon troops directed against France. No provision was arranged for a joint direction of warlike movements.

Up to 1812 the course of the war exhibits regular characteristics :— France, surrounded by a coalition of enemies, rapidly invades their countries, excepting Great Britain, making war support itself and keeping her own soil inviolate; beats them in turn out of the ring, except Great Britain, forces them to support her, and annexes an Empire beyond the dreams of Louis XIV. The Allies, on the other hand, have no single control of their various forces, but arrange plans piecemeal by a number of separate treaties, usually out of date by the time they are signed. Each directs its own forces on

some point of promise for its own ulterior ambitions, thinking more of future 'compensation' after the victory, which at first was taken for granted, than of the primary business of beating the enemy.

In 1793 Prussia was absorbed in the Second Partition of Poland by herself and Russia; Austria was planning to annex Bavaria in place of Belgium; Holland was, as usual, divided in mind, the Stadtholder and his party hoping for British help as in former cases, to maintain national independence, while the oligarchy of wealthy merchants hoped, as in former cases, that French help would drive out the Stadtholder for their benefit. The titular King of Sardinia (Duke of Savoy and Piedmont) only wanted to save his dominions from pillage and exhaustion. Naples hoped the French would not reach so far, or that the British fleet would provide protection if they did. Great Britain expected to fight at sea and therefore must have the Baltic open for her naval supplies; this compelled her to watch the Baltic Powers, yet she paid a still greater attention to securing the West Indies, so that much fighting occurred in that distant arena.

The French Republic conducted war with terrific energy. Each successive party of rulers knew that the enthusiasm of the nation would support the strongest and swiftest action. They kept up the confidence of Paris by ferocious executions of all manner of persons against whom anyone could breathe a suspicion—gentlemen, ladies, priests, officers, or men of letters. The pressure of want, now that industry and commerce were maimed, helped to fill the ranks with crowds of recruits whilst there still remained enough men and officers with the traditions of the old army to train them properly: soon a throng of brilliant young officers emerged, Hoche, Moreau, Masséna, Bonaparte, etc., each of whom could now perceive a career before him: an excellent stock of cannon and munitions had been bequeathed by the monarchy. And these rich resources were wielded, first by a great soldier and war minister, Carnot, "the organiser of victory," then by his greater successor, Napoleon Bonaparte.

THE FIRST COALITION (1793) was composed of Great Britain, Holland, Austria and the Empire, Prussia, Sardinia, Naples, Portugal and Spain. German troops advanced slowly from the Rhine across the French frontier.

In 1794 France annexed Belgium, invaded and defeated Holland—renaming it the "Batavian Republic"—and ordered it to become an ally against Great Britain. Prussia withdrew most of her forces to Poland, and Austria, alarmed by the Second Polish Partition, turned her attention, for a time, to arranging with Prussia and Russia for a share in the Third and final Partition of Poland which wiped that country from the map of Europe (1795). Prussia then extricated herself entirely from the western war by agreeing separately with France, in the *Treaty of Basle* (1795), to remain neutral in Germany and leave France to deal as she chose with the

petty and defenceless States on the Rhine. In the same year Spain also withdrew from the Coalition and soon after renewed her old alliance with France against England.

In the meantime the Cabinet of Great Britain had been wasting resources by striking at a number of disconnected points in order to assist allies who gave her no steady assistance. Pitt himself had no martial instincts. His brother, known as "the *late* Lord Chatham," though carefully trained for the army on 'the mathematics' of fortification, did little more than justify his nickname. Dundas, untroubled by diffidence, was only too ready to take charge of naval and military policy and to send incompetent generals with half-trained troops to perform difficult tasks hampered by impossible instructions. Happily the admirals, out of reach of Government couriers, had to be left to some degree to their own judgment, and the more they were left, the better went the war.

The British mistakes and failures of 1793 reflected the hesitation of the Cabinet and gave calamitous encouragement to our foes and discouragement to our friends. Dundas was Secretary of State for War, Windham, a Pittite Whig, Secretary at War; the two Secretaries pursued separate plans, and lives and time were wasted. Opportunities of attacking France were offered at once by three revolts against the new republic: in the west of France the famous popular rising of La Vendée, in the south-east, a royalist rising at Toulon, while Corsica attempted to rid itself of French sovereignty which had been fixed upon it in 1768 by a bargain between France and Genoa—all three appealed to England for help.

George III's temporary title of 'King of Corsica' is no more than an historical curiosity. The belated effort made in 1795 to help French royalists to utilise the Vendéan rising was a miserable and cruel failure. The gallant attempt of Admiral Hood,¹ aided by a Spanish fleet, to hold Toulon (1793) was impossible of success because the fleets could not protect the landlocked haven and city from a bombardment directed from the surrounding hills. All Hood could do was to destroy as many as possible of the French warships, crowd his own with refugees and extricate his squadron from the burning harbour. The permanent interest of the affair lies in the appearance of Napoleon Bonaparte as the officer who successfully directed the French artillery, and in the conviction, held thenceforward by the French people, that all royalists were traitors and that England was making war in order to restore the monarchy and aristocracy. A decree of the Convention declared Pitt to be 'the enemy of humanity.'

The Toulon expedition had also revealed the brilliant daring of Captain Nelson, by whose heroic efforts Hood was enabled to use Corsica as a base for the fleet, and thus both to ensure the adherence of Naples to the Alliance, and threaten the French invaders of North Italy.

¹ Samuel Lord Hood.

(B) THE FIRST MARITIME PERIOD (1795-9)

It was well that Pitt had carefully maintained and increased the Navy, for his economy and expectation of peace had reduced the Army to a mere nucleus. It was difficult even to garrison Gibraltar and the home ports: Ireland, Canada and the West and East India stations were most slenderly guarded, and in the military expeditions which followed the Navy too often had to attempt the tasks of soldier and sailor too.

The aims of our naval activity were threefold:—to defend the British Isles from invasion, to protect or convoy merchant fleets, to threaten and damage enemy fleets and coasts. In practice this meant that:—

(1) The Channel and the Straits must be protected by ceaseless watch not only on French ports, but on Flemish and Dutch ports also. (*See Map*, p. 55.)

(2) The Baltic trade, which still as in Elizabeth's time supplied the Navy with its prime necessities, had to be defended by a fleet in the North Sea and if needful in the Baltic itself. Paul Jones had shown that England was vulnerable in this quarter and the lesson had been learned.

(3) The Mediterranean must be held, alike as the route of the Levant commerce, the field of the French Toulon fleet, and for the purpose of assisting our Allies in Italy.

(4) The West Indies must be held because they were the necessary bases of all colonial and American trade with England and Europe.

(5) The route to India by the South Atlantic and the Cape must be kept open against French attacks based on Mauritius.

It was impossible to provide powerful fleets for all these purposes, and it would have taken genius to decide infallibly between them. Pitt's fault was that he often mistook the point of importance and sent raids out to distant harbours. He was wise in his perception that commerce was as important as fighting, for Great Britain had to pay her way and her Allies, and the war itself depended, for her, upon finance, as indeed all our wars have done from Edward I to George V. France "made war support itself"—her armies lived upon the country they invaded, they ate it bare and cleared it of portable wealth; the stores and trophies of palaces and banks were carted to Paris, the pillage of houses and shops rewarded officers and men. If this disillusioned the Belgians and Italians who had at first hailed them as deliverers, it made war vigorous and popular in France, exactly as the old Hundred Years' War on France had been popular in England. Great Britain often reaped plunder from captured enemy ships,¹ but by no means enough to supply 'the sinews of war'; these were maintained mainly by

¹ Such plunder belonged to the sovereign, who assigned a definite portion as prize money to the officers and crew who made the capture.

the Customs levied on our own merchantmen and any others which used our ports.

It was because of this financial basis of our war that the West Indies were felt to be of such extreme importance.

(a) The West Indies were the focus of the commerce from Mexico, North America, and half South America, which supplied Europe with the sugar, tobacco, coffee, rice, chocolate and cotton, generally termed 'Colonial produce,' the loss of which proved, in the end, to be an unbearable hardship to France and her allies. (b) Their harbours were the refuge not only of merchant ships, but of privateers and pirates, who preyed on merchant ships just as in the time of Louis XIV or Philip II. (c) If the United States should enter the war on the side of France—a grave possibility long before 1812—the islands would then be the critical naval station.



For all these reasons British fleets were continually busy in the West Indies, but they were too often employed in capturing single islands, which were retaken as soon as the fleet sailed away and then had to be again captured.¹ It was in difficult and dangerous tasks among the West Indies that Nelson as a young officer attracted the admiration of his admirals. In a very short time French merchant ships were swept from the Atlantic and French commerce was then driven into neutral ships. Over these neutral ships British cruisers kept careful watch, often by daring exploits.

The main object of British admirals, in this as in previous wars, was to find the enemy's fleets and fight them to a finish. That they were more successful than in previous wars was partly due to the French republican Government, which had removed most of the commanding officers in order to replace them by better repub-

¹ Cf. *Deeds of Naval Daring*, where many stirring exploits are recorded.

licans, though worse sailors, and then would command them to go out and fight the enemy, with as little comprehension of the difference between sea and land as had Louis XIV.

The English mastery of the sea was early demonstrated and throughout the war maintained.

The battle of the 'Glorious First of June,' 1794, crowned the fame of old Lord Howe. The French fleet had sailed out from Brest in order to convoy into harbour a number of corn ships from America, France being almost famine-stricken. Howe caught it in mid-Atlantic and the gallant Villaret-Joyeuse purchased the safe arrival of his convoy by a fierce battle in which superior seamanship and superior gunnery decided the day against him. The English navy now possessed (thanks to Kempenfelt and Howe himself) a workable signal system, and Howe's daring plan of battle was executed as daringly by captains among whom were Jervis and Duncan. The result was decisive, almost the entire Brest fleet being sunk, taken, or broken to bits.

Howe's victory was the more important because the British troops in the Low Countries, under the Duke of York, had only shared in defeats, the Duke, though he afterwards proved himself an able military organiser, being no born general.

When the balance of alliances was, in 1795, turned against us, Austria concentrated her efforts on Italy (intending to conquer territory there to compensate for the not unbearable loss of Belgium). England also found compensations which, though they did not affect the European course of the war, were valuable to a maritime nation. The adherence of Holland to France was punished, first by the seizure of her colony at the Cape of Good Hope (1795), and then by the annexation of Ceylon (1796).

In the meantime Bonaparte was waging the brilliant campaigns in North Italy which laid the Peninsula at his feet and made him the most famous and powerful of French generals or statesmen.

Unfortunately the defection of Spain from the Coalition (in 1795) had alarmed the English Cabinet, which seems to have thought of the fleet in the Mediterranean rather as a lamb amidst wolves than as a weapon of attack, and after neutralising its influence for a year by placing it under a lethargic admiral, they sent out the energetic Jervis (one of Howe's men) only to order him to evacuate the Mediterranean (1796), and so abandoned Italy to the French army, and the Mediterranean to the Toulon fleet.

The fact was that the British Ministry was scared when the French Directory despatched Hoche and his force to Ireland, and although a tempest had prevented a successful landing, the Cabinet afterwards could not feel safe unless a chain of fleets solidly blocked all the approaches to the British Isles from Holland, France and Spain. The result of this narrow defensive plan was hardly satisfactory.

Napoleon's habitual mode of dissolving Coalitions was the masterly

one of erushing out the weaker members and bribing the stronger at some third party's expense. In his marvellous campaign of 1796 in North Italy he established his invincible name by nine rapidly won victories, erushed Sardinia, beat the Austrians baek, and terrified the Pope and the petty dukes into submission. The Republie of Veniee, wealthy but defeneeless, pleaded its *neutrality*, but the French commander permitted no such status, the Republie must become an ally, otherwise, he deelared, "I will be an Attila to Veniee." Having seeured Veniee, he marehed on towards Vienna, but pausing at Léoben offered to negotiate (1796). If Austria would desert her allies, like Prussia, and relinquish the defenee of Germany she should be allowed to annex Venetia. Francie II aeepted the prtee offered for his honour and after a year of diplomaey signed the Peaee of Campo Formio (1797). Republiean France handed over to the Hapsburg dynasty the territories of the most famous republie in the world and the Germanie Emperor washed his hands of the Rhine.

The news of these transaactions made Pitt hesitate : if the Diree-tory was really intending a general peaee, Britain too was ready. He twiee sent Lord Malmesbury to Paris as ambassador, who suggested outlines for negotiation which included all the Allies, but refused to consider a separate contraet. The Directory therefore ordered Malmesbury to quit Paris.

France was now supreme on the Continent and had isolated Great Britain. Only one more invasion appeared to be neecessary to reduce "the insolent islanders" to submission. A great army was eolleeting and training, known as 'the army of England,' which was to be conveyed to our shores by the Duteh and Spanish fleets. But the Duteh and Spanish fleets could not get out of their harbours without fighting. The former was bloekaded, or rather watehed, by the tireless Admiral Dunean, the latter by Admiral Jervis with a galaxy of brilliant eaptains under him, including Nelson.

Jervis' vietory off Cape St. Vineent (Valentine's Day, or 14th February, 1797) was as deeisive as Howe's First of June; Howe had put the best French fleet out of aetion, Jervis did the like by the Spanish. The disproportion in numbers was alarming—fifteen British battle-ships to twenty-seven Spanish, for the vice-admiral who was to bring a reinforceement lost his nerve and sailed home instead. But by separating the enemy into two seetions Jervis designed to fight both in turn. Several of his eaptains, Troubridge, Nelson and Collingwood, understood his intentions so exactly as to spring by antieipation to the needed manœuvre; of them all, Nelson exeecuted the most dazzling exploit, so that the repute in which he had long been held by the admirals was publiely blazed abroad till even the Government learned of it.

Before the elose of the year the Duteh fleet also was disposed of by Dunean's vietory off Camperdown, the splendid elimax of a year's unremitting toil.

At one time, owing to the great mutiny in the fleet, Duncan had under his orders only his own flagship and one small consort. He sent the latter to a distance, whence she continually signalled to him, as if reporting the movements of more distant vessels. The Dutch therefore believed the main English fleet to be but just out of their view and put off the desperate day of challenging it. Duncan daily expected a discovery, but cheerfully told his officers that he had taken the depth of the water—the strait off the Texel island was extremely shallow—and that when the ship was sunk his flag would still be flying.

The rest of Duncan's command, however, returned to duty just in time to meet the Dutch fleet and destroy it, and thereby to foil the second attempt made by the French Directory and the gallant Hoche at an invasion of Ireland.

The 'army of England' was thus left without transport and at the disposal of Bonaparte, who had refused to lead it to that 'land of lost reputations,' Ireland. Though France was supreme in Europe, Bonaparte was not yet supreme in France: "The pear is not yet ripe," was his famous phrase. To ripen it he left the Directory to face its own problems and lose its credit while he withdrew himself and his army to reap, as he intended, still more dazzling fame, as well as wealth, in the Mediterranean East. There was no hindrance so long as the navies of England were depleted by alternate battle and mutiny.

It may be wondered that mutiny had not before paralysed the English Navy, the treatment of the seamen being at that time so harsh. The sailor's nominal pay was still on the scale of Charles II, and it was harder to obtain than in the days of Elizabeth. Food was bad; leave was never granted—because it was assumed that any sailor once ashore would desert; recruits could be got only by the tyrannical methods of the press-gang, or by *quotas* enlisted by the officials of the various counties, usually from the gaols. From Pepys to Kempenfelt naval officers had urged reform, but Government always turned a deaf ear.

At last the men of the Channel fleet, at Spithead,¹ drew up a respectful petition on their distresses which duly reached the Admiralty, but was ignored. The men then determined to force themselves into the notice of Government, and did so by a concerted act of mutiny. When the fleet was ordered to sea they disregarded their officers and would not sail. They preserved perfect order, and themselves made the usual arrangements to convoy the merchant fleets coming in and out of the Solent. The Admiral commanding, Lord Bridport (Lord Hood's brother), was helpless, but commissioners came from London empowered to grant the men's demands, all of which were perfectly reasonable. Unhappily the House of Commons was dilatory in passing the requisite formal Act, Fox, in particular, trying to make party capital out of the crisis. The sea-

¹ See for a clear description Callender, *Sea Kings*, III, 161-72, 182-8.

men began to think themselves deceived and again mutinied. This time the King asked Howe to visit the fleet. The aged and infirm Admiral was still the idol of the sailors, who knew they could trust to his word and his sympathy. His visit ended the mutiny at Spithead and the Channel fleet sailed to blockade Brest.

In the Thames station—the Nore—a very different kind of mutiny had broken out. One Parker, a clever man whose bad character had lost him promotion, organised a sedition on the principles of *The Rights of Man* and the practice of helping themselves. The ships stationed at the Nore began to terrorise and pillage the whole waterside, flogged unpopular officers, and seduced Duncan's vessels at Yarmouth, which for a time refused to sail for Holland. But as soon as practical military steps were taken and artillery put in position the better sense of the men convinced them of Parker's incompetence, they surrendered, and returned to their duty, signalised by the victory of Camperdown.

The poison of mutiny spread to other fleets and had to be severely dealt with by Jervis, now Lord St. Vincent. He was given command over the Mediterranean and the neighbouring Atlantic waters, which he controlled from Gibraltar. It was thus that he was able to permit Nelson to make the attack he desired on the Canary Isles (1797), a desperate and unsuccessful action, and that next year (1798) he sent him into the Mediterranean with a fine fleet to chase the French Toulon fleet, and, as it proved, to deal with Bonaparte's adventure in Egypt.

The great conqueror had been more prompt of decision than the British Cabinet. After Camperdown he had marched 'the army of England' to the south and embarked it on the Toulon fleet and its transports. They had all disappeared into the Mediterranean before Nelson reached the Gulf of Lions (May 1798), and the secret of the destination was kept too well for him to obtain any information.

He, therefore, set forth to hunt for it. He guessed correctly that Bonaparte would attack Egypt, but he got to Alexandria first and thought himself mistaken. Bonaparte had taken Malta on the way, to secure a naval base for his ships and to seize such riches as the Knights of St. John had bestowed on their cathedral. The Knights and their island fortress were, of course, neutral, but defenceless neutrality was always disregarded by the revolutionaries.

Two days after Nelson's fleet left Alexandria the French reached it. What exactly was Bonaparte's scheme has never been discovered (it must be remembered that the statements he afterwards made about this and other events were intended to produce particular impressions). By attacking Egypt he was making war on the Turkish Sultan, and he spoke to his officers of Constantinople, the Levant, India and Alexander the Great. He had brought a number of distinguished men of science whom he set to work on methods of developing the natural wealth of Egypt so as to make it a profitable possession. Already French emissaries in Hindostan

were abetting Tippoo Sultan at Mysore in his attack on the East India Company. It was not impossible for France to set up an Oriental empire which should supplant the English semi-control of India, provided, at all events, that the English Navy kept out of the Mediterranean.

The Battle of the Pyramids¹ (July 1798) gave Bonaparte the mastery of Egypt, but immediately after he was checkmated by Nelson's second visit to Alexandria and his sweeping victory in Aboukir Bay, known as the Battle of the Nile (1st August, 1798). By destroying Bonaparte's transport Nelson had stranded him and his army amid the deserts. He could not even obtain news or despatch instructions, for the Mediterranean and the Red Sea were now swept by English ships. With magnificent boldness he led his troops to cross Syria by the Palestinian coast route (the military road of the Pharaohs and of Allenby). The sole obstacle to the French progress was the decayed little fortress of Acre, famous in Crusading days. It commanded a harbour used by British vessels, and to protect it was stationed Captain Sir Sidney Smith with a couple of ships (March 1799). Inside this 'mud-hole,' as Bonaparte termed it, was a ferocious Turk with a garrison of barbaric soldiery; but they were directed by a French royalist engineer officer named Phélypeaux. He and Sidney Smith had been imprisoned together in Paris, had escaped together and were together bent on a desperate resistance to the revolutionary Cæsar (or Alexander). The French siege guns were brought from Egypt on merchant vessels, Sidney Smith captured them, the sailors towed them into the 'mud-hole,' and Phélypeaux taught the Turks how to use them and how to make the mediæval walls impregnable. In spite of all their skill and gallantry the French could not carry this obsolete fortress; drought and pestilence sapped their strength and Bonaparte found himself, for the first time in his career, compelled to give up his enterprise and to lead a disheartened army back to Egypt. Sidney Smith accompanied their return, at sea, but then the commodore, with his habitual conceit, ignored Nelson's urgent advice to keep Bonaparte shut up in Egypt and keep him without tidings. Thinking only of his own credit and convenience, he allowed Bonaparte to receive newspapers which revealed the perilous position of France and the discredit of the Directory—in fact, to learn that at last "the pear" was "ripe" for him (July 1799).

This information determined Bonaparte to reach France at all hazards. He left his skeleton of an army under General Kléber and took the first opportunity of a favourable wind to escape from Alexandria (August 1799), accompanied by a number of picked officers. By wonderful good fortune he eluded the English ships and landed at Fréjus, near Cannes, early in October 1799.

By all the French Bonaparte was hailed as a saviour, whom,

¹ Before the battle he addressed the troops with—"Soldiers, forty centuries are looking down upon you!"

indeed, they required, for they were now menaced by the SECOND COALITION, framed by Britain, Austria and Russia in consequence of the victories of the Nile and Acre, and the allied successes already showed that without her brilliant general France must at last expect invasion.

An administrative revolution in Paris, known as that of *Brumaire* (9th November, 1799), now bestowed on Napoleon Bonaparte the title of 'First Consul' and the power of a dictator, and his strokes of war and policy were as brilliant and rapid as the conditions demanded. He himself marched to face the Austrians in North Italy, which they had recovered during his absence, while Moreau met them on the Rhine and Swiss front.

The Second Coalition depended on the impulse of the half-crazy Tsar Paul, on the staying power of Austrian armies and British fleets, and on the financial resources of Britain, which were poured by Pitt into Austrian hands. But we ourselves were still so scantily provided with soldiers that the Cabinet's promise to send an auxiliary army to help Austria in Italy remained unfulfilled, though a naval force blockaded Genoa, where a retreating French army had to endure a terrible siege. The Coalition's best generals were the Austrian Archduke Charles and the Russian veteran, Suvorov, but their colleagues were far less able, so that the attempt to attack France simultaneously along a front from Holland to Genoa, in 1799, proved too difficult. Suvorov's splendid troops wasted away fighting their way through the Swiss mountains and back again; the English army, under the Duke of York, with a second Russian army, was sent to the Helder, in the corner of Holland, to try to recover the country for the Prince of Orange. The remarkable result was that the Dutch sailors compelled their officers to hoist the flag of Orange, refused to fight the English, and sailed amicably back with them to Yarmouth, where, on the orders of the Prince of Orange (who had taken refuge in England), they thenceforth acted as allies of England. But on land the Anglo-Russians were unable to fight their way out of the narrow promontory of sandhills on which the orders of the Cabinet had stranded them, and there the Duke of York, after the defeat of Bergen, had to capitulate (October 1799). The terms were light: our troops came home and we lodged the Russians, somewhat insufficiently, on the Channel Isles. But the fiasco covered England with shame and mortally offended the Tsar.

At the moment of Bonaparte's return the Coalition was already dissolving. The Tsar Paul had now conceived a romantic admiration of the First Consul. The German States refused to aid Austria, after her desertion of them at Campo Formio, and Prussia's attitude was equivocal. Bonaparte made an offer of negotiation to George III, but our Government was convinced that it was a mere trick to gain time and declined to negotiate, except on a basis of 'security for Europe' (1800). In any case the Coalition could not survive

the tremendous blows which drove Austria from the field, Bonaparte's victory at Marengo (June 1800) and Moreau's at Hohenlinden (December 1800), which so greatly impressed contemporary imagination (see *e.g.* Campbell's ballad). The result was the Peace of Lunéville (February 1801), whereby Austria virtually surrendered. The Emperor recognised the Rhine as the French frontier and the Adige as the Austrian, while the rest of Germany and Italy, as well as Holland, was abandoned to the control of France, that is, of the First Consul.

XXV

THE ARMED NEUTRALITY AND MARITIME WAR (1800-7)

IN the meantime the First Consul had skilfully utilised the Tsar to provide a new weapon against Great Britain by a revival of the 'Armed Neutrality' devised twenty years before by Paul's mother, Catherine II. Bonaparte was now reversing his earlier policy towards neutral States in order to bring them into line with France against Britain. The ground was the eternal grievance of the 'right of search' claimed by a naval belligerent (England), to which was opposed the claim of neutrals that unarmed neutral ships 'ought' to sail the seas unhindered—although on land neutral merchants never dreamed of claiming any similar immunity. Now that the Dutch flag had, in its turn, been swept from the seas, French and Dutch trade could be carried on only in the vessels of the Baltic Powers, or of America, since the Spaniards, in spite of their pro-French royal family and ministers, were so unwilling to aid the French that the Spanish war fleet had been almost dragged out of its ports by the French and escorted into Brest (1799), a proceeding which naturally still further endeared the two nations to each other.

By the end of 1800 the Second Armed Neutrality was complete. It was formed by (1) Russia, (2) Sweden (afraid of Russia), (3) Prussia (afraid of Russia and covetous of Hanover), (4) Denmark (drawn in by Prussia).

The Baltic States complained of English tyranny at sea, and especially of the compulsion on neutral ships to sail first into a British port, there to be searched for enemy goods, which were confiscated before the vessels were set free to proceed to their destinations. They claimed that "free ships make free goods," or, as the English expressed it, that "the flag covers the goods": henceforth, they claimed, merchant ships convoyed by a man-of-war flying the flag of a neutral State must be immune from search, except for "contraband of war," meaning actual munitions, and as to this the word of the naval commander was to be sufficient.

The 'Neutrals' expounded their principles by their actions. Prussia annexed Hanover and Bremen, Denmark occupied Hamburg and Lübeck, Russia seized three hundred British vessels with their crews, and all four States laid an embargo on British commerce and confiscated such British-owned goods as could be found. The

Cabinet in London promptly retaliated on the Neutrality's ships and despatched a strong fleet to the Sound, under Sir Hyde Parker¹ and Nelson, the former to direct policy, the latter to fight.

After a fierce struggle in the waters of Copenhagen (23rd March—1st April, 1801), known as the Battle of the Baltic, the Danish Government submitted and the English sailed on into the Baltic Sea, to the consternation of the Neutrality, which believed such large ships incapable of getting in. After a considerable delay, due to Parker, Nelson reached the Russian naval port of Reval only to learn that the Tsar Paul had been murdered and that his son, Alexander I, was ready to negotiate. The result was a compromise, both Great Britain and Russia modifying their claims. The embargo on the British Baltic trade now ceased and our naval supplies were replenished as before, but so were the dockyards of France and Holland, in which Bonaparte was causing to be constructed new fleets to attack the English. His attempt to cancel British naval superiority by diplomacy had so far failed, but from this time, and especially in 1802–5, the commercial shipping of the only really neutral Power, the United States, increased so rapidly and carried so much French trade as almost to fill the place of a commercial ally to that country, besides causing a sensible decline in the British Customs revenue.

The Armed Neutrality was but one of the gathering storms that threatened Britain. Bad harvests and the lack of Russian corn resulted in a shortage of food which approached famine: the increasing riches of manufacturers and merchants furnished Government, indeed, with funds but did not circulate among the poorer classes, who suffered terribly. Agitation, riots and trials, a large expenditure on voluntary charity, and the soaring poor-rates made all classes long for peace. Ireland was still seething with discontent.

Pitt's health had been failing for many months, and the discovery of his inability to procure the Roman-catholic enfranchisement he had virtually promised to Ireland was a grievous blow.

He could not do otherwise than resign (February 1801), and with him resigned also those of his colleagues who agreed strongly with his Irish policy and war policy—Grenville, Dundas, Windham, Spencer (Foreign Office, War, Navy), Cornwallis and Castlereagh (Ireland) as well as his ardent young disciple, George Canning.

If the peace overtures which Pitt had last year rejected should be repeated a new Ministry would not be hampered by Pitt's traditions.

In order to lessen the shock and danger to the country, Pitt promised the King to support the new Ministry, which was not to be formed by the small Whig opposition but by a respectable mediocrity, Addington, Speaker of the House of Commons. George III still detested Fox, but he could hardly, in any case, have entrusted the Government in the middle of a war to the chief of a tiny and unpopular pacifist party.

¹ Son of the Sir Hyde Parker of 1781.

Addington took office in March 1801, as soon as the King recovered from the brief mental breakdown due to his agitation at Pitt's conduct. He formed, with Pitt's private assistance, a Cabinet of respectable peers, among them the inert Chatham and the ponderous Portland. With something like poetical justice the intriguing Loughborough was replaced as Chancellor by Lord Eldon, one of the most famous of English judges, who retained his office, save for a short interval, till 1827.

Addington was sufficiently intimidated by the giddy eminence he had reached to seek for able assistance, and was quickly converted to Fox's belief in Napoleon's peaceful intentions. The first steps towards negotiation were taken by the English Cabinet, but were not encouraged in Paris till after the Battle of the Baltic and the subsequent appointment of Nelson to defend the south-east coasts of England. His defence was conceived on the usual naval principle—"England's first line of defence is the enemy's ports." This pressed the enemy so hard that, in the autumn, negotiations had progressed far enough for hostilities to cease, while the treaty-making was continued.

The terms of the Treaty of Amiens (1802) included the evacuation by France of Egypt, Naples and the Papal States, and the evacuation by Britain of Minorea, Malta—on condition that its independence was guaranteed by four other Powers and by a Neapolitan garrison; of the Cape—on condition that it should become a free port; and of all the other French, Dutch and Spanish colonies which had been annexed at the cost of so much blood and treasure, only excepting Ceylon and Trinidad. Thus Britain surrendered her Mediterranean stations, those on the way to India, and the rich French West India Isles, and acquiesced in the Napoleonic control of Europe. It was assumed by Addington that a commercial treaty would follow and would satisfy some of the unmentioned British claims and rights, but the First Consul took care that no such concessions should be even considered. It was "a Peace which everybody would be glad of but nobody could be proud of," and the two great rivals, Pitt and Fox, both supported it in the House. Pitt declared that it provided for us that security which had been our sole aim, and Fox rejoiced that Great Britain had ceased to fight a republic which had executed revenge on the hateful Bourbons. It was only in private that he dared to express his joy that 'republican' France had defeated monarchical England.

The Peace lasted a year; hardly was it signed when the approaching breach of it was evident. But the few months' breathing space at least permitted the withdrawal of forces from various scattered enterprises, most of which ought never to have been undertaken. From French and Spanish coastal towns, West India Islands, and Egypt, where the expulsion of the French had cost Abercromby's life at the battle of Alexandria, soldiers and sailors were brought home. Only in India the two Wellesleys held steadily

on at their work till the battle of Assaye (1803) ensured permanent success (*see* Chap. XV (ii)).

The ministry, in their relief and enthusiasm, behaved as if this sudden peace was to last for ever and instantly economised on the fighting services. They also determined that one Secretary of State was sufficient for War and the Colonies. A large section of cultivated Society, led by Fox, hastened to Paris, to admire its new glories and enjoy its olden pleasures, but were perturbed to learn that the First Consul was continuing his European conquests "in time of peace." Piedmont was annexed to France, Switzerland made a dependency,¹ the representative of the royal Bourbon-Condé family, the Duc d'Enghien, was kidnapped in his house in the neutral State of Baden, taken into France and shot. Bonaparte himself assumed the title and dignities of *Emperor* (proclaimed 1804). He ordered the Diet of the German Empire at Ratisbon (1803) to adopt a new system for the western German States, the CONFEDERATION OF THE RHINE, from which Austria was excluded and of which he himself became president. He obtained his will by making gifts of the very small territories to the rulers of the larger ones (Bavaria, Würtemberg, Baden), and thus inducing them to support himself against Austria or Prussia. The Dukes of Bavaria and Würtemberg were by him saluted as kings, and George III could not forgive his daughter, the new Queen of Würtemberg, for accepting the elevation.

This control of half of the old German Empire by the Emperor Napoleon (as he must henceforth be entitled) left Britain without any friend or ally save Portugal: at the same time the French Emperor, who had taken the measure of the Addington Cabinet, was assembling large bodies of troops on the shores of the Straits of Dover, his secret emissaries were stirring up rebellion in Ireland and war in India, a great number of flat-bottomed boats were being built in the large rivers of Belgium and France, and new battleships were being completed in the dockyards. He even commissioned a design for a medal to signalise his conquest of England. Finally, he made a public intimation of his intentions by railing at the British ambassador, ordered the arrest of all Englishmen visiting French territory, and the invasion of Hanover (June 1803). The only possibility of avoiding war lay in submission beforehand, which Napoleon seemed to suggest by sending a haughty demand to our Government to impose restraints on the English Press so as to prevent it from printing criticisms of himself, and to expel a number of French refugees. The Government rejected both demands, although, perhaps to exhibit impartiality, they endorsed Fox's prosecution of a printer who had put forth a libel on the First Consul (*Peltier's Case*). Then, not to allow the enemy still more time for preparation, Addington declared war (May 1803).

The duel between the two Powers, maritime and military, which

¹ See Wordsworth, "Two Voices are There."

reopened in 1803 and came to its maritime decision at Trafalgar, was planned, by both sides, with far-reaching strategy.

The English navy sought to find and destroy the enemy's war fleets, but the French navy was regarded by Napoleon primarily as transport for the army with which he would invade England, and was ordered to avoid a fight. His final scheme was to combine all the French and Spanish fleets in a 'sweep' of the Channel, which was to 'brush' the English navies out of the way and enable the 'Grand Army of England' to cross the Strait in boats. "Let us be masters of the Channel for six hours and we are masters of the world," he declared. A little later he besought his naval commanders to hold the approaches to the Strait for three days: "and then England will be finished."

The two main French fleets were, of course, in Brest and Toulon. Secondary contingents lay in Rochefort, the Rhine mouths and the Texel, as well as the Spanish navy in its own ports, if only it could be coaxed out to fight for the French Emperor. As Napoleon habitually ignored winds and tides and English fleets, he issued instructions to his unhappy admirals as if they had only to turn troops out on a barrack ground. When they saw their opportunity for a fight he forbade them to leave harbour; when they said that going out meant sinking their ships he told them they were cowards.

The English Admiralty (St. Vincent being First Lord) replied to the invasion threat by an active occupation of the seas, not only the Channel, but the Mediterranean and West Indies also, one feature of which was, as ever, a blockade of the French ports. Napoleon's plans were not certainly known; he used to give out false ones in order to delude the enemy; but it was clear that blockaded fleets could not ferry over an army, therefore Great Britain was at least secured from invasion. The Channel fleet, the most important of all, was commanded by Admiral Cornwallis (brother of the General), who himself directed the famous two years' 'close blockade' of Brest, always the most trying of naval tasks. Subordinate squadrons watched Quiberon, Rochefort, Finisterre and Ferrol. The northerly area from Dunkirk to the Texel was entrusted to Lord Keith. Nelson commanded the Mediterranean fleet, and was responsible for the blockade of Toulon, as well as for the entire control of the sea from Cadiz to the Levant. Malta was the furthest English station east, but the friendly ports of Sicily provided his real base. The presence of English ships was the mainstay of friendly governments in Portugal, or in the Italian States, and Nelson might have to keep in touch with the Russian or even Turkish Government, none of whom must be neglected while Pitt was (1804-5) trying to unite a league against Napoleon.

In the West Indies too there was always a squadron, and continual visits and exchanges of vessels and commanders took place, between the Channel and every station as far as Jamaica, Malta, the Canaries, or the Cape. All the while single ships incessantly

patrolled all routes, followed up suspicious strangers, 'looked into' enemy ports to count the shipping, and flew to and fro, in all weathers, to bring to the responsible commanders and the Admiralty the all-important tidings of enemy movements, sometimes perhaps signalled from a sinking ship, to be carried on by light craft, or even by a privateer; but in spite of the sailors' daring, news was always precarious.

Fits of panic not infrequently swept over the people, eagerly counted on by Napoleon, and utilised in the House of Commons for party purposes. In vain the naval members endeavoured to impart their own confidence.

"I do not say the French *can't* come," growled St. Vincent, "I only say they can't come *by sea*."

"I do not really see, in the arrangement of our naval defence," expostulated the urbane Pellew, "anything to excite the apprehensions even of the most timid among us—a triple naval bulwark, composed of one fleet acting on the enemy's coast, another stationed in the Downs, and a third close to the beach, capable of destroying any part of the enemy's flotilla that should escape the vigilance of the other two." The last covertly satirical phrase alluded to a collection of bombing boats and river-craft, provided to reassure the panic-struck and the amateurs. Cornwallis and Nelson and their gallant subordinates, Saumarez, Pellew, Cochrane, or Collingwood, would have greatly preferred to deal with the enemy on the open sea, but they loyally carried out their orders to maintain the blockade, and the exploits of the year 1804 raised the skill, discipline and spirit of the British navy to its acme, while that of the French within its landlocked prisons as steadily sank. Napoleon was occupied with the lengthy business of assuming (May) the imperial title, followed by a papal coronation in Paris (Dec.) and coronation as King of Italy the next year. But 1804 was signalised in England by the return of Pitt to office, in April. Napoleon's imperative orders to his admirals at last, in 1805, gave the English commanders their opportunity. The French fleets were bidden to sally forth, elude the English, *without fighting*, entice Nelson to Egypt and Cornwallis to the West Indies, leave them there, and hasten back together to Boulogne,¹ to protect the crossing of the 'Army of England.'

Villeneuve, at the end of March 1805, succeeded in getting out of Toulon and concealing his fleet behind the Balearic Isles from Nelson's scouts. It cost Nelson nearly a month to obtain certain tidings and to provide for his other Mediterranean duties.

In the meantime, Ganteaume, vainly explaining to Napoleon that the English fleets at the mouth of the gulf made it physically impossible to get out of Brest without fighting, had to stay in. Only the small Rochefort squadron contrived to get away and

¹ It is not possible to relate completely here the crowded naval campaign of 1805—which may best be followed in Corbett's *Campaign of Trafalgar*.

duly made for the West Indies, where, with considerable difficulty, it eventually found Villeneuve.

By the time Nelson reached the Caribbean Sea, Villeneuve had skilfully laid a trail of false information wherewith American ' neutrals ' and deluded British Governors misled Nelson into thinking that Villeneuve had already started back to Europe. He therefore left Cochrane in charge of the Islands and hastened back to Cadiz, sending a swift brig to the Admiralty with tidings. Her captain, Bettesworth, actually came in sight of the French fleet on his way, counted them, noted their position and course, made all sail to Plymouth and galloped to London, reaching the Admiralty in the middle of the night.

There was a new First Lord, old Lord Barham (Sir C. Middleton), once the disciple of Kempenfelt and a man of long experience as Controller of the Navy and Sea Lord under sundry political First Lords. All the admirals and officers had reckoned that Nelson's arrival in the West Indies would drive the French-Spanish fleet out of them : the critical problem was to ensure the concentration of a superior fleet at the point of its reappearance, which might be off Ireland, Plymouth, or almost any spot from Boulogne to Cadiz. Bettesworth's news implied, to Barham, that it could be met earliest off the north-west point of Spain, so he rapidly despatched to Cornwallis a brief explanation and orders to hasten reinforcements to Admiral Calder, off Ferrol, and himself stretch out in support of him ; he and Cornwallis both knew that the Brest fleet would not be quick enough to get out before Villeneuve had been dealt with.

Villeneuve's latest orders, in fact, directed him to ' brush aside ' little squadrons, fetch Spanish allies out of Ferrol, and attack Cornwallis from one side while, on the other, the Brest fleet was coming out. Napoleon did not choose to imagine that Cornwallis might not remain stationary. It is among the ironies of history that the long-expected hour of contact brought Villeneuve into the arms of Calder only, but more ironical that Calder sufficed. They fought in a shifting fog what is reckoned as an ' indecisive action ' (22nd July), after which Villeneuve skilfully withdrew to Vigo and was landing his sick and wounded next day while Calder was cruising about, hoping to renew the battle. Calder, who expected a peerage, was surprised to find himself (three months later) called before a court-martial for not having destroyed the enemy. Villeneuve was probably not surprised to receive furious reproaches for the prudence which had prevented him from charging on into the Channel with his battered ships to be sunk by Cornwallis. He succeeded in extracting some Spanish men-of-war from Ferrol, but he could see on the horizon the English ship keeping watch on him and was convinced that Nelson lurked just below the horizon, ready to pounce. A month after the fight, having learned that Nelson had sailed north, he contrived to lead his now large

fleet once more into safety in Cadiz harbour, where Collingwood with his two ships drew off to let him in and then, with every ship he could collect, closed up again to keep the watch.



TRAFALGAR—ENGLISH WEATHER LINE LED INTO ACTION BY NELSON IN THE *VICTORY*.

Nelson, in fact, not meeting with the French off Gibraltar, perceived that they had gone by the northerly course and had already taken his fleet up to join Cornwallis. The Brest fleet had made some efforts to come out, but Cornwallis had soon pounded it in

again, and had also covered the arrival of our precious East and West India fleets. The critical moment was really passed, the critical decision made, the maritime command was proved to be too securely in English hands to allow the grandest of armies to pass the Straits of Dover, while in the meantime the *Coalition* of Allies which Pitt had been so patiently negotiating was completed.

This, the Third Coalition, of Britain, Russia and Austria, lasted for just half a year (July–Dec. 1805).

When Napoleon realised after the ‘drawn’ battle off Ferrol that it was not possible for his unlucky admirals to ‘brush’ the English fleets aside and ‘sweep the Channel,’ he executed the magnificent military feat which closed with the victory of Austerlitz. The whole ‘Army of England’ swept from Boulogne to Bavaria, overwhelmed one Austrian army at Ulm (October 1805) and the other at Austerlitz (December 1805), and so crushed Austria out of the Coalition. Prussia had already (February 1805) been bullied into a treaty which would apparently keep her for ever on bad terms with England. She ceded her Rhine possessions to France and accepted instead Hanover, which she actually annexed in December. But while Napoleon was carving up the Continent, Nelson had completed the maritime campaign on which the French Emperor had turned his back. That Villeneuve was receiving orders to come into the Mediterranean Nelson could not know, but he and all the seamen took it for granted that an enemy in Cadiz could be edged out for a fight, and Navy and ministers alike were intensely aware that no security would be felt by the public till the enemy fleet was destroyed.

Nelson, then, ably seconded by Collingwood, executed to perfection the now traditional task of English admirals, to lure the enemy into the open sea for a fight to a finish. The result, the tremendous victory of Trafalgar, by sweeping from the sea the French–Spanish fleets, abolished the scare of invasion from the public mind and gave dramatic proof to the world of the supremacy of England on the ocean. “England has saved herself by her exertions; she will, I trust, save Europe by her example,” said Pitt in his last speech. But the loss of Nelson made even Trafalgar a grief rather than a triumph in the public mind.

The news of Austerlitz, which dashed to the ground his hope of victory and peace, was the final death-blow of Pitt. Dundas, now Lord Melville, had already been suddenly removed from political life by the sequel to Pitt’s own party-spirited attack on Lord St. Vincent. That Admiral (First Lord under Addington) was triumphantly vindicated, but on charges of peculation which arose out of the investigation Pitt’s First Lord, Melville, was impeached; it was really a factious blow at Pitt, exactly as the previous attack on St. Vincent was a factious blow at Addington. Pitt’s failing strength gave way under the double strokes. “My country, how

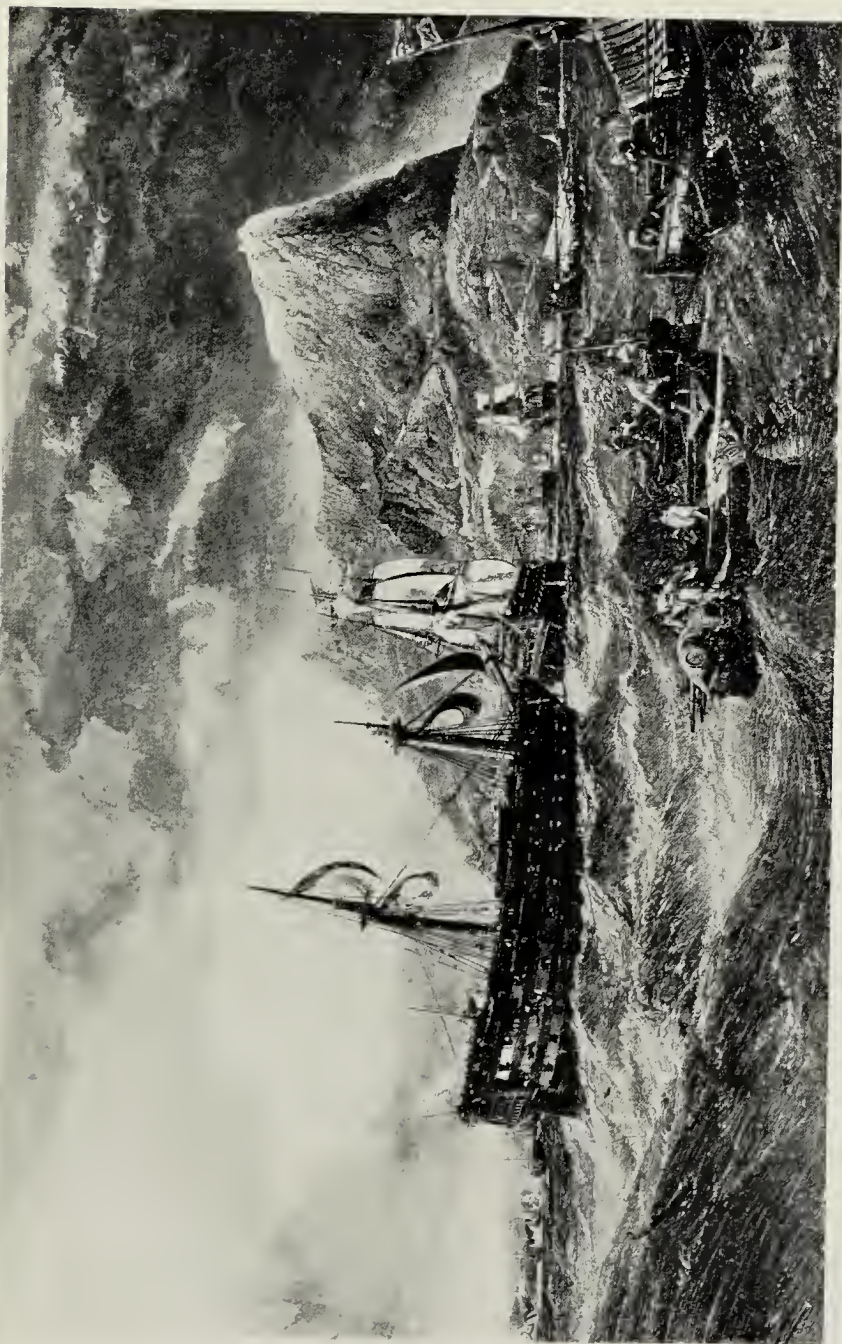
I leave my country——” were the last words audible to the watchers by his death-bed (January 1806).

The Whig Lord Grenville, once Pitt's friend, now Addington's, was the new Prime Minister and he composed a Cabinet of clever men out of different parties, which was laughingly described as “All the Talents.” It was dominated by Fox, who at last was obliged to take responsibility and begin the practice of his principles—peace



VICTORY SIGNALLING ‘ENGLAND EXPECTS THAT EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY’
AND NEXT SHIP REPEATING SIGNAL.

with France and reform (but not parliamentary) at home. He prepared the certain abolition of the Slave Trade, which was achieved shortly after his own death. But his offer to negotiate with Napoleon was met by the demand that, as a preliminary, Great Britain should abandon her allies. Napoleon was rapidly extending his continental empire, and with each fresh success he required, through his matchless diplomatist, Talleyrand, a fresh concession



GIBRALTAR, THE VICTORY WITH BODY OF NELSON ON BOARD.

BY STANFIELD.

from the English ministers. Fox discovered that while the restoration of Hanover and Sicily was proffered in words, the former was being garrisoned by Prussian and the latter by French troops. He was compelled to recognise, as he said, that the shuffling of the French showed they were playing false, and to continue the war and the measures of Pitt, which he had for a dozen years so fiercely denounced. In September 1806 he died, disillusioned.¹

The course of the war was unchanged in essentials by the death of any individual.

After Trafalgar Napoleon's reply to the British navy was an attack on our commercial sinews of war by reviving the system of the *Armed Neutrality*. From the beginning of the revolutionary conflict, as already shown, there had been a tenacious struggle over sea-borne trade. The French Directory had before tried to deprive Britain of her Customs revenue by forbidding the admission of any British goods and confiscating, not only all they could seize, but the neutral ships which brought them. The Directory had not had the power to execute its policy; Napoleon, when he copied that policy, had the power, at all events on land.

In the meantime Great Britain, possessing a marine capable of executing her plans, had since 1793 elaborated a system for managing the merchant shipping of neutral countries on such lines as, while protecting commerce, gave to England a toll (by way of customs) for all the produce carried by neutrals:—London, Gibraltar, Malta and several West India ports were made centres for neutral ships, which were obliged to visit one of them to pay the dues and prove they were not carrying *contraband of war*; after this they were given a kind of passport and might proceed without further interference.

Neutrals were, of course, inconvenienced, and though they reaped enormous profits without any risk, they complained that their respective flags were 'insulted,' and believed that they could make still larger gains. The British regulations were varied, from time to time, not only to suit naval and political circumstances, but to placate some neutral who must not be turned into an enemy. The important neutrals were, (a) the United States and (b) the Baltic Powers—Sweden, Denmark and Russia. Sweden was during most of the war period friendly with Britain; Denmark preferred France. Russia, much the strongest of the three, was occasionally an ally, but undependable.

When Fox² as Foreign Minister continued the British series of Orders by the *Order in Council of May 1806*, he did not insert the usual detailed exemptions for particular neutral interests, but proclaimed a universal blockade from Brest to the Elbe mouth.

¹ Scott recorded the general feeling on Pitt and Fox in the *Introduction to Marmion*.

² Fox was responsible, though a permanent official, Rose, drafted the Order.

Though modifications were made immediately after Fox's death, the sweeping nature of his *Order* afforded an excuse for Napoleon's reply in his *Berlin Decree* (November 1806). He proclaimed the British Isles to be 'blockaded,' not by sea, but at the ports of the French empire and its allies, which were closed to British ships and goods (including colonial) as far as the efforts of French officials could reach.

This policy, known as the *Continental System*, took some time to enforce. The year of its inauguration at Berlin (1806) saw Napoleon on the crest of success and splendour. The empire under his immediate authority was vast and he was surrounded by sub-kings. He had enthroned two brothers, Joseph and Louis, in Holland and Naples, had crushed Austria and Prussia, entered Vienna and Berlin, carved Germany into a new territorial system, and bestowed royalty on obedient princes. He had proclaimed that "the Holy Roman Empire had ceased to exist" and the last humiliated Emperor of that ancient phantom had submissively assumed a new title as 'Emperor of Austria.' Spain and Italy, too, were Napoleon's obedient satellites, he had even set up at Warsaw an ephemeral 'Republic of Poland,' composed of the portions of Poland annexed barely a dozen years earlier by Prussia and Austria; the humiliated Papacy was compliant, and of the two remaining independent countries, Great Britain and Russia, the latter was on the verge of compromise.

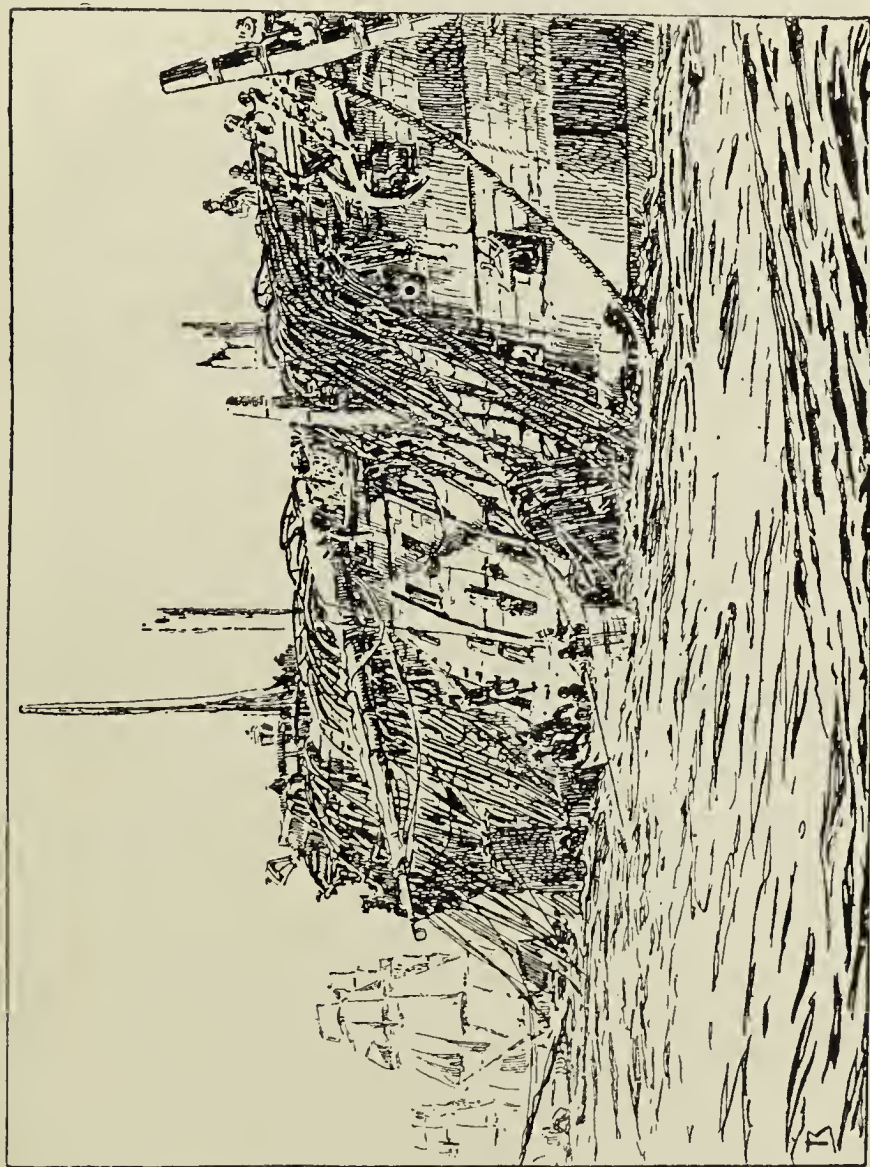
The fearful bloodshed of the battles of Eylau and Friedland (1807) gave pause to both the Tsar and Napoleon, and the latter contrived to conciliate Alexander I so far as to bring him to a personal conference at Tilsit.

The two potentates met alone, upon a raft moored in the river Niemen, and believed themselves safe from *Pitt's spies*—the dread of whom formed the worst strain upon French nerves. Nevertheless the gist of the agreement speedily travelled, by the channel provided by the dead Pitt, to George Canning, the new Foreign Minister in Portland's Government.

At the Treaty of Tilsit (July 1807) Napoleon and Alexander I virtually divided Europe between them and agreed to exclude Great Britain from it. Napoleon was to take the western provinces of Germany, so lately bestowed on Prussia, for a new Kingdom of Westphalia and to hold other parts and fortresses of Prussia, which would then be helpless: the Tsar was to partition Turkey and Sweden and to close his dominions and the entire Baltic to British commerce. Neutrals were to be forced to join the System. The Danish fleet was to be used to coerce Sweden and to stop the entry of British trade into the Elbe ports. In fact, communications between London and Hamburg this year went round by Constantinople.

The tidings from Tilsit caused Canning to direct a second expedition to Copenhagen under Admiral Cathcart and General

Sir Arthur Wellesley, which seized the Danish fleet, bombarded the Danish capital and took possession of Heligoland, as a valuable post for naval observation and smuggling. The manner



ADMIRAL VILLENEUVE LEAVING THE FRENCH FLAGSHIP, *BUCENTAURE*, AT CLOSE OF BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR.

in which the attack on Copenhagen was conducted placed the British Government technically in the wrong. Napoleon after a paroxysm of rage loudly proclaimed his horror at the perfidy of Great Britain, and made all haste to seize secretly the sole remaining neutral fleet, that of Portugal.

XXVI

THE PENINSULAR WAR (1808-13) AND WAR WITH AMERICA (1812)

THE continual changes of ministers between 1805 and 1812 increased the uncertainty of English plans. In six years there were seven Foreign Secretaries and five changes in the office of Secretary for War and the Colonies, not to mention the changes in the Admiralty, and the less distinguished ministers '*at war*' and for Ordnance, who habitually disagreed with their official superiors.

All the ministers, till 1812, continued and exaggerated Pitt's mistaken policy of sending expeditions to attack any places on the circumference of the ocean which they fancied might be easy to capture or profitable for commerce. They appear to have thought it economical to send out small armies insufficiently equipped. Twice they even sent an army with a commander at liberty to act on his own initiative, Sir John Moore to Sweden, Sir Home Popham to the Cape and South America. They could not, in 1807, perceive how much more important was Portugal than commercial ports on the Rio de la Plata.

The mercantile and social connections of Portugal with England had been drawn close throughout the eighteenth century. Portugal was the health and pleasure resort of large numbers of English people, and the business of the country, not solely its famous wine trade, but the manifold commerce of its vast and wealthy dependency, Brazil, were largely administered by, or dependent on, English bankers and merchants.

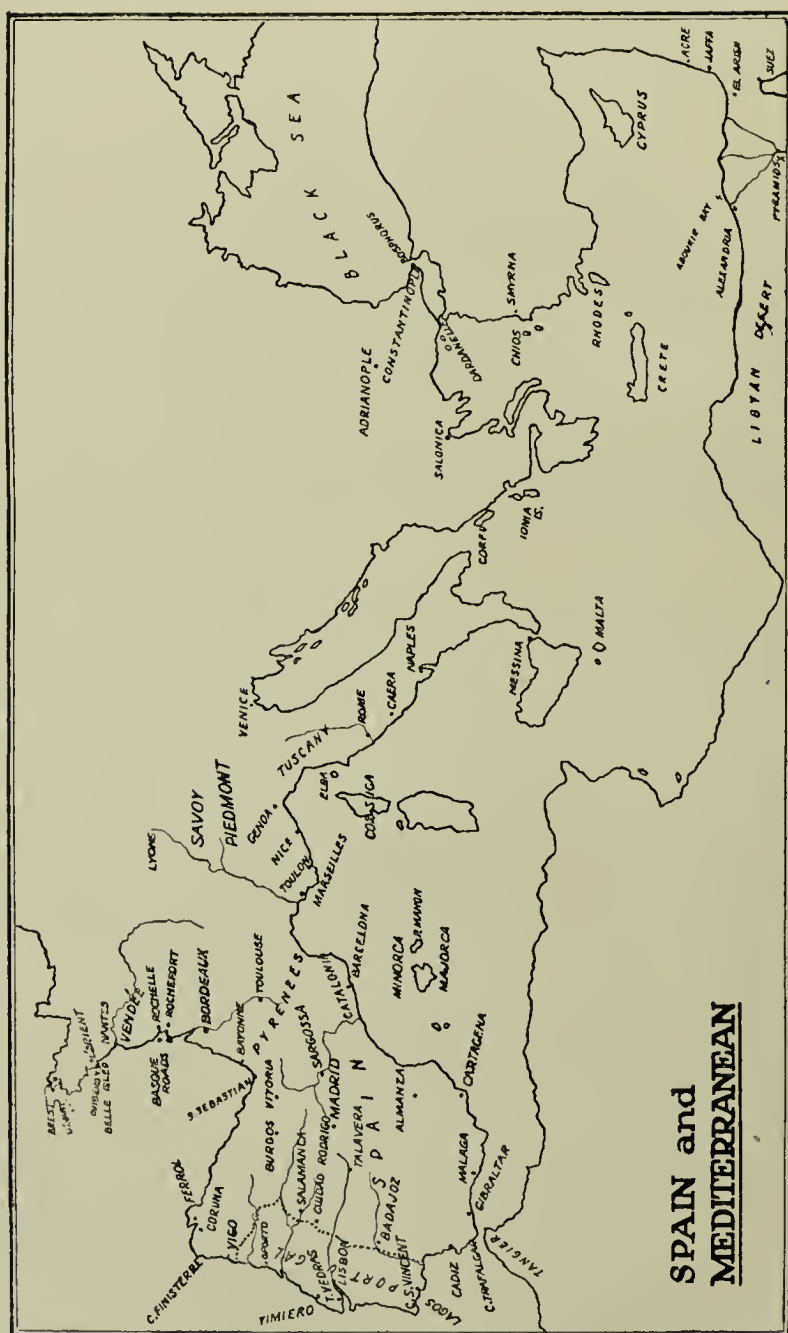
But politically Portugal was feeble. Her sovereign was insane and the Prince Regent presided over a mere parody of a government. Upon receiving Napoleon's ultimatum the Regent, feeling defenceless between French armies and British fleets, implored the British Government to permit him, as he was powerless to resist the French, to enter into a nominal state of war upon us, without retaliating. At the same time he notified to Napoleon the complete submission of Portugal. Neither plea availed much. A British squadron under Sir Sidney Smith entered the Tagus, but no military force could yet be sent, because expeditions had been sent to the Cape, Buenos Ayres, Monte Video, Alexandria, and the Dardanelles, so that no force remained for a call nearer home. Napoleon, on the other hand, took no notice of the verbal surrender of Portugal, but carried out his plan of conquest.

He had already arranged with the obsequious Spanish government for a combined attack on Portugal, which was to be partitioned, and in the autumn of 1807 Marshal Junot was ordered to lead an army at top speed across Spain to Lisbon and arrive "if possible as friends, in order to seize the Portuguese fleet." A Russian squadron, then in the Mediterranean, undertook to block the mouth of the Tagus; Englishmen were to be seized as prisoners and their property as plunder. All that the English ambassador and Commodore Smith could do was to persuade the Prince Regent to escape with his fleet across the sea to Brazil. Escorted by British warships the whole Portuguese navy, together with all the merchant shipping in Lisbon harbour, sailed away with the royal family and treasure on board, and a host of refugees, escaping Junot only by a few hours. The French Marshal arrived with less than two thousand exhausted troops, the rest having perished by hunger, cold and wet on the march across Spain. A handful of determined men might have destroyed them. At the same time the Russian squadron entered the estuary, and Sir Sidney Smith, having seen his charges well out into the Atlantic, duly returned and blocked it in.

At this point Napoleon overstepped the limits of military power. The disreputable royal family of Spain had obeyed French dictation ever since 1795, in spite of the general distaste of the Spaniards, but in 1808 Napoleon proceeded to take the country into his own hands, partly as a necessary step towards subjugating Portugal. By a variety of threats and promises he cajoled both the aged King and the Prince of Spain into visiting France, kept them prisoners, announced that they had abdicated, proclaimed his brother Joseph King of Spain, and sent French armies to occupy the forts, cities and roads of all Northern Spain.

The result was a universal uprising of the Spanish people. In district after district, an elected committee, or *Junta*, directed local efforts whereby the French were assaulted, ambushed, assassinated and starved in a formless guerilla war.

One of the Juntas appealed for British aid, as did the provisional Government in Portugal, requests which were promptly granted. Sir Arthur Wellesley was sent with an army to defend Portugal, but his victory at Vimiera (August 1808) was wasted by the two superior generals who were sent to supersede him by the nervous Cabinet. They forbade him to pursue the enemy and allowed Junot to bluff them into the 'Convention of Cintra,' which permitted the French army, with all its plunder, to return to France on British vessels. All three generals were recalled to answer for such a concession, while Sir John Moore was ordered to take over the army in Portugal. The Spanish generals promised to co-operate with transport, supplies and Spanish troops, and their information led Moore to advance into Spain towards Burgos, a fortified city full of stores, but none of the promises were kept and all the tidings



proved imaginary. In truth Napoleon had entered Madrid with forces eight times the number of Moore's and had already established Joseph as King. He despatched Soult with orders to "drive the frightened leopards into the sea," and Moore, knowing himself fearfully outnumbered, and deserted by the Spaniards, conducted a swift retreat to Corunna, where he believed transports to be ready for his troops. There he turned on Soult and defeated him. He himself fell, but the troops re-embarked safely for home (January 1809). Soult retired into Portugal; Napoleon had already gone back to Paris, to deal with the threatened Austrian war, and Spain gained a long respite by Moore's dash at the French, though she was not capable of making much use of it, although the English control of the sea procured the return of the Spanish regiments dragged by Napoleon to the Baltic.

As the inquiry on the Convention of Cintra showed that Wellesley was in no way to blame, he was sent out again to Portugal (1809), whence he brilliantly expelled Soult and, advancing into Spain, won another victory at Talavera against great odds. He was created Lord Wellington, but got no reinforcements. The hollowness of all Spanish professions compelled him to retreat again into Portugal, and there he prepared for a lengthy war on very slender resources. The Spaniards were equally jealous of all foreigners: if the French were pagans, the English were heretics. Juntas and generals were jealous of each other and all alike were incapable of reporting anything but dramatic information. Portuguese and Spaniards, said Wellington, hated each other worse than they did the French. But the Portuguese were at least willing to be trained, and therein lay his hope.

The undertaking of the Peninsular War turned out to be, as Wellington foretold, the first step towards the breaking down of Napoleon's empire. The credit is partly due to Canning and Castlereagh, Foreign and War Secretaries in Portland's Ministry (1807-9), but mainly to Wellington himself, but for whom it would have begun and ended merely as one of many gambling strokes.

He told Castlereagh, in 1809, that, with 30,000 English troops, he could hold Portugal against any numbers the French could bring, up to 100,000, and that while Austria kept Napoleon at bay in Central Europe they could not mass so many; neither could they subdue Spain while an English army held Lisbon and the Portuguese coast was open to English fleets. But he did more than this. He was given only 19,000 men, too few cavalry and hardly any artillery; but he caused Beresford to have the control and training of the Portuguese troops, and in time obtained from them some reliable regiments and tolerable artillery to add to his scanty force.

He did yet more. Though the Spaniards deceived and deserted him, forsook his wounded and pillaged his stores, Wellington rescued half Spain from the French by challenging, or drawing to

himself, like a magnet, army after army, and defeating each so thoroughly that the Spanish guerillas could deal effectively with them afterwards.

He was for three years almost neglected by the English Government, while it frittered away a fine army on Walcheren. From 1809 to 1812 Wellington had to depend on himself, short of all military supplies and of money, knowing that soldiers lost could not be replaced, preyed on by the native populations, who expected the English army to be as impregnable and insensate as iron, and as profitable as a gold mine. Wellington, therefore, acted with the utmost caution. With Beresford's aid, he organised among the Portuguese population enough factories, agriculture and mills to provide for the needs of his troops. What Napoleon could obtain by issuing a few commands or his marshals by confiscations, Wellington had laboriously to construct, and to make himself responsible for.

More than this, when his first forecast was negatived by the submission of Austria (1809), which set free French troops for Spain, Wellington immediately altered his plans to meet the emergency. The French could not, he knew, start till the spring of 1810, therefore, while he was still operating in Spain (October 1809), he directed his engineers to collect thousands of labourers and construct vast earthworks, fortifying the promontory of Torres Vedras, beyond Lisbon, so as to enclose the whole hilly mass with the city, between the sea, the Tagus and the fortifications. There were three series of lines, but the enemy never saw more than the first. Secrecy was enjoined and preserved. The north-east frontier of Portugal was guarded for five months by Craufurd's famous Light Division against forces six times its own number, without permitting any French soldiers to get in or any news to be carried out. In the meantime the Austrian attack on Napoleon, which should have been rapidly co-ordinated with British efforts, had failed.

After a series of hard-fought battles against the heroic Archduke Charles (April to July 1809), Napoleon had finally overcome Austria, at Wagram, and dictated the Peace of Schönbrunn, which dismembered the Austrian empire.

Austria had, of course, sent to Great Britain to ask for help in rousing a German movement against the French, and a splendid expedition had been fitted out, to make this diversion. But with extraordinary folly it was directed instead to the Rhine mouth to destroy Flushing on the Island of Walcheren, and afterwards Antwerp, and Castlereagh named the Earl of Chatham general. As it did not even set out till after the fatal battle of Wagram, it could be of no service to the Austrian war, and the withholding of the troops and supplies so badly required in Portugal grievously hampered Wellington. The Admiral and the General had equality of command. The expedition was landed on the marshy island of Walcheren; and the sheer incompetence of the leaders kept the

army in this insanitary spot till the greater part fell victims to disease and had to be brought home. The disaster was humiliating and the popular indignation was loud, but Castlereagh and Canning were chiefly concerned to throw the blame on each other. The popular rhyme assigned the blame pretty justly :

“The Earl of Chatham, with sword drawn,
 Stood waiting for Sir Richard Strahan,
 Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,
 Was waiting for the Earl of Chatham.”

Next year, 1810, Napoleon signalised his control of Europe by ordering the seizure and destruction of all British and colonial goods in the Baltic ports and all over Europe. The articles were burnt, which not only ruined many continental merchants but stopped their orders for British produce and thus ruined numbers of English firms and banks. This looked like the success, at last, of the System which was fighting the maritime Power on the land frontiers, especially as France herself suffered less than other countries : “I mean to conquer the sea by the land,” Napoleon boasted. It was at this time that Napoleon set chemical experts to work on experiments, which eventually showed how sugar might be obtained from beetroot. England was now labouring under both commercial disaster and hunger, the corn supply from the Baltic being interrupted. But by far the worst sufferers were Napoleon's allied or dependent States. In Germany, Poland, Sweden and Russia landowners could not sell their timber and hemp, shopkeepers had no stocks, workmen no wages, firms and banks no money to lend. Nobody had sugar, coffee, tobacco, or the chocolate which was the universal breakfast drink of the richer classes. Most outraged of all were the Americans, who had expected to trade with both sides and now found themselves pillaged.

But Napoleon's general success enabled him to pour troops into Spain in 1810-11, and the concentration of overwhelming French armies compelled a British retreat, as Wellington had foreseen. He repelled Masséna by the victory of Busaco, and then marched back on Lisbon, making the population along his route accompany the army and convey with them, or else destroy, their crops, till all were shut in safely behind the Tagus, leaving only a foodless desert for the advancing enemy (October 1810).

Masséna, staggered by the impregnable defences of Torres Vedras, lined by Portuguese guns, waited in front of the Lines a few weeks, trying to collect supplies from the emptied country, then retreated on some fortified Spanish towns. He is said to have lost 44,000 men. Wellington, the French marshals allowed, was a master of defensive warfare.

From the impregnable refuge of Torres Vedras Wellington set forth in 1811 to deal a series of blows at the enemy in Spain. The French generals had now broken up every Spanish force and again

converged towards the Portuguese frontier, holding several fortress towns as advanced bases, particularly Burgos, Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz. Napoleon supplied them with great numbers of picked troops and plentiful stores from Bayonne. The Emperor hoped, in 1812, that the subjugation of the Peninsula was in sight. He urged his marshals to end this drain of men, this 'Spanish ulcer' which, he declared, was ruining him: "Nothing matters but the English"; further plunder or organisation must wait until he had finished the war on Russia, on which he was now entering.

But Wellington was aware of Napoleon's march to Russia and now carried out a series of rapid and terrifying attacks, totally unexpected by the French from their 'cautious' opponent. Having insufficient artillery, he stormed Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz in a manner hitherto held impossible, foiled both Soult and Marmont, and finally crushed the latter, who had a third army in reserve behind him, by the lightning stroke of the battle of Salamanca (July 1812). "Forty thousand men beaten in forty minutes." But though the British entered Madrid in triumph and reached Burgos, their small numbers and insufficient equipment compelled another retreat, Ciudad now serving as their own winter headquarters.

The sufferings our troops had undergone and their maltreatment by the Spaniards broke down their *morale* disastrously, especially after the storming of the two fortresses and on the retreat from Burgos. But the brilliant victory of Salamanca compelled the English Ministry and people at last to support their great general and his heroic army. Cabinet changes in 1812 brought Castlereagh and Bathurst to the Foreign and War ministries and they at last sent out adequate reinforcements. It was Castlereagh who linked the militia with the regiments, and induced the trained men to volunteer for foreign service by giving high bounties (£15 to £40, considered then enormous).

The French marshals, on the other hand, no longer commanded in 1813 such lavish resources as earlier; the Russian adventure had absorbed and destroyed the best troops and they received inferior recruits. They were driven back towards their own frontier, the grand road to Bayonne forming the axis of defence and attack.

The greatest battle of the war was Wellington's complete victory at Vittoria (21st June, 1813). At last the French army broke into a rout, abandoning an immense treasure and five years' plunder. A million pounds in coin was, it is said, seized by the English soldiers.¹ The French could only rally on the mountain watershed, where

¹ A hundred years later a traveller found 'the English' still traditionally popular in a remote Pyrenean valley because they had paid twice as much for a cow as it was worth. The perfect essential summary remains Tennyson's ("Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington"). For explanation see Oman, *Wellington's Army*, and Fortescue.

Soult directed a splendid defence of the frontier of France, till he was finally driven back, at the close of the year, to Bayonne and St. Jean de Luz.

Early in 1814 Wellington continued his advance. The victorious Peninsular army forced the French to behold war in their own land, to suffer the depredations of their own soldiery and see their best general slowly but surely driven from town to town, till the great city of Bordeaux saved itself by declaring against Napoleon and proclaiming 'Louis XVIII,' just as Wellington drove Soult out of Toulouse. At this moment arrived tidings of the defeat of Napoleon in Northern France and his first abdication, and Wellington closed the Peninsular War by a Convention with Soult.

THE AMERICAN WAR OF 1812-14

As if the struggle with Napoleon did not sufficiently exercise the resources of the nation, the Liverpool Ministry, in 1812, contrived to slide into a superfluous war with the United States of America.

The resentment which most Americans cherished against England had been inflamed afresh by Fox's Order in Council of 1807, which automatically inflicted hindrances upon American shipping. The effects were noticeable in the goodwill which Americans showed towards the French, though the United States Government, under George Washington, steadily rejected Napoleon's overtures for an alliance and joint war. The American navy was not to go to the limbo of Danish, Dutch and Spanish fleets. But the increase of the American merchant marine entailed a curious and unforeseen penalty on the British Admiralty. There were more vessels than crews, and owners tried, by high wages and good conditions, to attract foreigners. British seamen, pressed for war service, kept always at sea, on low pay and under rough conditions, snatched at every chance of deserting to the better service. In consequence British frigates, incessantly scouring the Atlantic on the Canadian or West Indian routes, habitually stopped every vessel they met, and searched it for their runaways. The Americans hotly resented both the insult to their flag and the injury to their commerce. They also accused our captains of seizing on *bona fide* Americans, on pretence that they believed them Englishmen.

The British Government disregarded the remonstrances of the American Government until at length the latter carried out its threat and declared war, in 1812. Then, for nearly two years, spasmodic fighting took place near the coast of the United States, in the form of maritime duels. The British Admiralty dared not spare many frigates for the West, while all ships of the line were fully occupied in European, Indian, or African waters.

The United States did not, at that time, possess many naval vessels; it is said, only twelve. But her frigates were much larger

than ours and more heavily manned and armed, so that the English ships were usually overmatched. The most famous of these combats was that of the *Shannon* and *Chesapeake*, Captain Broke of the *Shannon* finally taking his rival after a fierce hand-to-hand combat.

The land campaigns, if costly of life, were unproductive of results, and reflected so little credit on either country that both usually prefer to ignore them. The invasion of Canada, which may almost be called the traditional policy of the U.S.A., was attempted, somewhat on the old French model. A large force was despatched, before any declaration of war had been made, to the shores of Lake Ontario, so as to be in position to invade Upper Canada as soon as public war began. The march of some 200 miles through forests and swamps consumed some time and the Canadians were warned. They defended themselves by promptly intercepting the intending invaders' supplies of ammunition and food, and so compelled them to surrender. But the Republic's flotilla on the Lakes carried out destructive raids and burned the Government buildings at the Canadian capital, Toronto: a disaster duly avenged in kind when a British squadron landed an adventurous force which made its way to the American capital, Washington, and burned the public buildings there.

When the Peninsular War came to its close, the English ministers proposed to invade the U.S.A. thoroughly, but they sent their considerable forces to the mouth of the Mississippi, in the belief that New Orleans and its cotton exports were so valuable that the Americans would sue for peace. Fever and malaria broke the gallant regiments of that famous army. But while negotiations were proceeding among the belligerent nations of Europe, the two maritime foes came to their senses, and closed this irrational quarrel by the Treaty of Ghent, 1814.

XXVII

ENGLAND AND EUROPE (1814-15)

(i) ENGLISH POLITICS (TO 1820)

GREAT BRITAIN had been at war for just over twenty years when Wellington was ordered to pause in his victorious career at Toulouse. During this long period of strain everything had become secondary to the needs of war. Reforms which otherwise would have come about by Act of Parliament had been put aside, and needs which would naturally have been met by voluntary effort—for example, in education—had been neglected; war had produced distress among large numbers of the population and the organisation to provide troops for it, by press-gangs and the like, roused resentment. Consequently, at the close of the war England had fallen into a far worse condition, internally, than at its beginning, and her position externally, with regard to the rest of the world, was also altered.

On the Continent, the Revolutionary wars had produced changes more sweeping than any events save the Crusades or the Reformation. France as the military dictator of Europe was nothing new, but Napoleon's organisation had taught to Germans and Italians and Poles practical lessons in administration, personal liberty and political combination. They had seen courage and genius victorious over convention and rank; old feudal customs and privileges attached to noble birth had disappeared; money exerted its influence openly; religious systems were made to appear as simply a systematic convenience. Whatever might be re-established of the ancient national governments, the frame of mind which had supported them could never be re-established.

England, having been so far ahead of other countries and having preserved herself inviolate from invasion, had, of course, not experienced these sudden changes. But her Government had thought it necessary to safeguard the constitutional system by some temporary coercive laws which were greatly at variance with that system. Both the constitution in the abstract and the methods of government in actual practice were opposed by knots of enthusiasts in London and other towns, who yearned to see England and Scotland follow the lead of America and France in the abolition of monarchy and the crection of some kind of popular republic. No Government in the middle of a dangerous war could allow active

propaganda of this kind to go on, and several of the leading speakers and publishers of this pro-French party were tried for seditious libel. Muir and Palmer, the most notorious, were transported (1793) to Australia; but as other cases might be expected, and as some *Corresponding Clubs* formed by the agitators were in friendly communication with the Jacobin Club of Paris, Pitt twice suspended the *Habeas Corpus* Act (1794 and 1798) so as to give magistrates the power to send to prison, though untried, persons whom they conscientiously suspected of treason.

A *Treasonable Practices Act* and a *Seditious Meetings Act* (1795) made it impossible to hold any meetings without permission.

In 1799 and 1800 laws against *Combinations* of working men even forbade efforts for industrial reform. After Pitt's death the increasing misery of the labouring classes led to riots, which impressed the governing classes with such terror that magistrates and gaolers treated prisoners with cruelty and new repressive laws were hurriedly passed.

Politically, the party names of Whig and Tory had, by 1814, become misleading.

'*Tory*' had come to mean, from 1790, 'Pittite,' the sovereign being treated as a person entitled to some real power or influence, and England's national welfare as the main object of policy. Pitt had never given up the hope of accomplishing reforms, though he had been obliged to defer them by the majority in the Commons. After his death, however, few of his professed disciples or successors, except Canning, kept reforms in view. Lord Sidmouth (Addington), Castlereagh and Lord Liverpool were convinced that any change was dangerous and repression the only safe reply to agitations for reform. From 1810, therefore, 'Tory' got the meaning of opposition to reform, which it retained for the entire career of Sidmouth and Castlereagh (till 1822).

'*Whig*' after 1794 might mean either (a) the Burke and Portland party, who called themselves the *Old Whigs* and at that date joined Pitt and supported his stand against revolution, or (b) the *New Whigs*, who condemned the war with France and opposed repressive legislation. In either case it signified the great landed families and their friends and protégés.

Of the 'New' Whigs, the elder leaders, Fox and Grenville, advocated the extension of the political franchise to Roman-catholics (called 'Catholic Relief') and the abolition of the Slave Trade, while the younger, Grey and Erskine, advocated some parliamentary reform—but all these had been the cherished schemes of Pitt.

In the end, political reform was carried by the Whigs (1832), and social reforms principally by the Tories, particularly by Canning and Sir Robert Peel.

The ministerial changes were as follows: Pitt resigned early in 1801. Addington's Ministry, 1801-4, included the 'King's

Friend' Lord Hawkesbury (afterwards second Earl of Liverpool), Lord Chancellor Eldon, always an extreme repressionist, the young Tory lawyer, Perceval, and the stolid Whig magnate, Portland.

Pitt's second Ministry, 1804-5, included Eldon, Portland, Sidmouth, Hawkesbury, and two young men, Lord Castlereagh and George Canning. After Pitt's death the Ministry of 'All the Talents' (1806) comprised Lord Grenville, Fox, Grey (afterwards Lord Howick and later Earl Grey), Sidmouth, and the liberal-minded lawyer Erskine as Lord Chancellor. After Fox's death this Ministry carried the Anti-Slave Trade Bill, but when they introduced a Bill to open naval and military ranks to protestant Dissenters and Roman-catholics the old King turned them out.

Portland then constructed a more Tory Ministry (1807), with Eldon instead of Erskine, Liverpool, Perceval, Canning (Foreign Secretary) and Castlereagh (Secretary at War). The last two, both followers of Pitt, disagreed over war measures, quarrelled after the Walcheren disaster, resigned, and fought a duel. Portland died and was succeeded by Perceval, who took Castlereagh back as Foreign Secretary (1812), but excluded Canning.

Almost immediately Perceval was assassinated by a lunatic and Liverpool then succeeded as Prime Minister, with Sidmouth as Home Secretary and Castlereagh as Foreign Secretary. Castlereagh was, in fact, the leading member of every Ministry from 1807 till his death in 1822, and as English Plenipotentiary at the Congress of Vienna (1814-15) he exercised a European influence.

In 1810 George III had become totally insane, and the Regency Bill of 1811, modelled on Pitt's in 1788, made the Prince of Wales Regent. In 1820 he succeeded to the Crown.

Canning was not again in office till 1816, nor in important office till 1822.

The Tory party had rapidly changed in aims and temper after the death of Pitt, though its leaders still professed themselves Pittites. Till 1815 its first object was, of course, to preserve British independence, but the reforms at home, which had been Pitt's original ambition and always remained his cherished hope, were totally forgotten.

The war had moulded Pitt's successors into much the same frame of mind as that of their predecessors the Whigs. By *policy* they meant foreign policy, and they regarded Europe as the proper study of statesmen.

(ii) RUSSIA

Although Great Britain had borne the greatest strain of the war, having provided all the naval forces and paid enormous subsidies to the land Powers, she did not, in the Congress of Vienna, exercise a proportionate influence.

The most powerful factor at that Congress was Russia, partly

because the master of millions of soldiers naturally, at that time, commanded universal respect, partly because of Alexander's energetic character, and very largely because, though the main burden of the war on Napoleon was borne by Britain, the last dramatic act of it was due to Russia.

Alexander I was almost as impressive an actor as Napoleon himself. Wellington despised all theatrical artifice, his iron demeanour was inflexible, and his pride and constitutional convictions made him scorn both argument and sentiment. Castlereagh was probably the worst public speaker who has ever been an efficient minister; and these two represented Great Britain in a Congress where the Tsar, the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia appeared in person, and the Austrian minister, Metternich, was a consummate diplomatist only equalled by Talleyrand.

The antagonism between Alexander I and Napoleon was not purely personal. The commercial blockade had impoverished and angered the noble, clerical, and commercial classes in Russia to a degree which alarmed the Tsar. When the news of the Spanish rising had fired some patriotic outbreaks in Germany and Wellington's victories had broken the spell of the 'invincible' French, Alexander had made some overtures to Great Britain and opened his ports again to 'neutral' vessels bringing British and colonial produce (1810-11). Napoleon's rebukes as well as his arrogant treatment of certain German royalties offended the Tsar, who felt doubly insulted by Napoleon's request for an Imperial Russian bride, and by his prompt marriage, when this was refused, with an Austrian Archduchess. The Tsar then abandoned his rôle of twin chief of the modern Julius Cæsar for that of the protector of enslaved peoples (provided that they were outside Russia and Poland), and the Russo-French war began.

When Napoleon attacked Russia he attacked the problem which had in ancient times defeated the Romans in Germania and, in late times and a lesser degree, the English in North America. He attacked a nebulous enemy in a country where the vast scale of Nature wore down human effort.

The Russians had no true capital—no Paris or London from which radiated the threads of an intricate national life, which could there be paralysed. Nor were there even key positions, ports or passes the occupation of which meant the control of the country. The Tsar and his army were the real, but mobile, capital. The mass of the population lived in so elementary a condition that the massacre of thousands, even the destruction of entire towns or armies, made little impression beyond the immediate district. Hence Napoleon's invasion of Russia and retreat from Moscow (1812) merely destroyed his own, the most magnificent army yet known. Nevertheless, so little news was reported, that on his return to Paris, almost alone, he could collect fresh troops and set out at once to face the Austro-



DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

NOW IN WELLINGTON COLLEGE. BY SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE.

facing p. 253.

Prusso-Russian coalition which was now breaking his yoke off Central Europe. From March to October 1813, a series of battles, chiefly in Saxony and the Bohemian mountains, demonstrated his military genius and the determination of his opponents. The last and greatest battle, the 'Battle of Nations' at Leipzig, was being fought when Wellington was in the midst of the Pyrenees (1813). Napoleon's defeat led to a fresh campaign on the French Rhine frontier early in 1814, and while Wellington was conquering Gascony Napoleon abdicated (April 1814) and Louis XVIII returned to Paris.

(iii) THE HUNDRED DAYS

The first Peace of Paris (May 1814) was destined to last only for eleven months.

Napoleon was given his choice between Corsica, Corfu and Elba as a kingdom and home, and chose the last, where he took up his residence with much state. Ample incomes were settled on his family and principal officers and his wife was provided for as befitted an Austrian princess.

But the French people, after welcoming Louis XVIII with apparent warmth, soon became universally discontented. They had expected to retain the extended frontiers won by Napoleon and the homage due from Europe to the conquering nation, as well as to rejoice immediately in lessened taxes and the pleasures of peace. The inevitable disappointment was heightened by the unwisdom of the new régime, royalty being, of course, after twenty-five years a novelty. The Bourbons had come back, as the famous phrase ran, "having learned nothing and forgotten nothing," and they increased the dangers of the crisis by a host of petty alterations which offended or mulcted everybody under fifty and inspired suspicions of a larger reaction. The French, now for so long accustomed to excitement, were in no temper to allow a few years to the new Government in which to settle difficult problems, but at once despised it. As for the relations which were to exist between France and England, it was extremely unfortunate that the Bourbon royal family should have returned under the protection of British troops. In vain had Wellington and his generals in Gascony observed the strictest neutrality as to Emperor or King, they were in Paris assumed to be the guardians of the returned *ancien régime*.

Napoleon, watching in Elba, decided in March 1815 that his time had come and returned to France. As in 1799, he was hailed as a saviour and dictator and had only to make a triumphal procession to Paris, whence Louis XVIII and his family hastily fled to Belgium.

Napoleon went straight to the Tuileries and began his second reign, known as "The Hundred Days."

The story went that the Congress at Vienna was in the midst of a fierce argument when the tidings of Napoleon's return to France

arrived; a profound silence fell, broken by the Tsar with a roar of laughter.

It was obvious that the decision and fate of France, on which depended also the lot of Europe, could only be determined by a fresh appeal to arms.

The potentates called out their troops again, and it was taken for granted that the prime decision would be in Belgium, now the threshold of France, England and Prussia. Here could assemble at once the troops of Great Britain, the Netherlands and Prussia, while the Austrians and Russians would collect a second army, to overawe France if the first should fail.

Napoleon hoped to break the first armament piecemeal before the British and Dutch, under Wellington, should join the Prussians under Blücher. Then he might be able to deal with Russia and Austria by diplomacy. He had an enthusiastic French army, rather fewer in numbers than the Allies in Belgium but of infinitely better quality.

The army which Wellington was to handle was composed, not of the magnificent Peninsular veterans with whom he had once said he "could go anywhere and do anything." The majority of that heroic force had been sent, by a callous Government, to the swamps of the Mississippi or the frosts of Canada. The army which was to strike in Belgium was composed only one-third of Britons, and two-thirds either of excellent Hanoverians or quite unreliable Netherlanders. Of the British portion, two-thirds had never seen war. But not for nothing was Wellington nicknamed the Iron Duke. He knew of what type his English soldiers were—and these were trained militia men, not the clearances from the prisons which had so often been sent as recruits to Spain. They were not all fine marksmen, like his old troops, nor could they be rapidly manœuvred, but they could understand their orders and handle their muskets and they would stand firm. The Duke reckoned on the Torres Vedras temper. Blücher and the Prussian army had but recently conducted a fine military duel with Napoleon in France (1814), and on receiving Blücher's pledge to support the British stand, Wellington believed that he could trust to it.

(iv) WATERLOO

In the brief campaign which decided the fate of Western Europe for half a century, the two great opponents seem to have been evenly matched. Wellington had, shortly before, surveyed the Belgian territories for the purpose of advising on their military defence, and had marked the Waterloo position, while Napoleon had the French frontier forests and fortresses as a perfect screen for his movements up to the days of battle, and till the day of Quatre-Bras and Ligny (June 16) the Allies did not know on which of four possible

routes he would attack. His soldiers were more seasoned than most of Wellington's, and much superior in artillery, but if Wellington and Blücher combined they would vastly outnumber the French.

Napoleon's aim, therefore, was to keep them apart and deal with each in turn. He succeeded up to the point of attacking British and Prussians separately, at Quatre-Bras and Ligny (16th June). But the unbroken stand and skilful withdrawal of the former he attributed solely to Ney's 'mistakes,' and took for granted that the defeat of the Prussians was final, and that they would behave as they 'ought'—retire to the Rhine, whereas Blücher was marching to approach Wellington again, while the Duke, having received the old Marshal's promise to join him, had placed his army to stand on the undulating slopes called Mont St. Jean, not far from the village of Waterloo.

Accident favoured both sides equally. Grouchy, in pursuit of the Prussians, who were assumed to be making for the Rhine, lost them for many hours; on the other hand, Blücher was hurt and lay long unconscious while his second in command, Gneisenau, assuming that of course Wellington must be beaten and anyhow would not keep his word to stand, delayed the German march as much as he could, so that the British remained alone till the evening.

Had not the German generals omitted to send Wellington some information directed to him by his special scout, had not Blücher been insensible for those hours after Ligny, neither Quatre Bras nor Waterloo would have been fought with such heavy odds against the British army. Had not Napoleon kept D'Erlon's division marching all the day of Quatre Bras, he could have really beaten either the British or the Prussians.

For the final day (Sunday, June 18th) Wellington distributed his now much-thinned army with consummate skill along the level-seeming slope of Mont St. Jean, its bare front broken only by the two famous farms of Hougomont and La Haye Sainte. The positions appeared to lie open to Napoleon's view, and when Soult, with his Peninsular memories, endeavoured to caution the Emperor against trusting to this, he answered contemptuously: "You think Wellington a great general because he beat you; but I tell you he is a bad general and the British are bad soldiers." "They will be a breakfast for us," he assured another officer.

The battle of Waterloo was a trial between assault and endurance, and between Napoleon's impetuosity and Wellington's tactics. After his heavy cannonade had punished the opposing troops, Napoleon ordered charge after charge, under D'Erlon or Ney, to break Wellington's centre. But that centre was not so simply to be reached.

As in so many Peninsular battles, Wellington's stretched-out line, fed from reserves behind the curve of the deceptive slope, stood firm, and each time withered with its rapid fire the head of every approaching column. As the day wore on, the charging masses

were arrayed deeper and heavier, but as they staggered through the wet rye and over the masses of dead men and horses Wellington's thinned regiments formed in squares and fired steadily, the gunners standing to their guns till the French were almost upon them before running into the squares, then dashing out again to their batteries as the front of the French columns fell: "I had never heard of a battle in which everybody was killed," wrote an officer of the Rifle Brigade afterwards, "but this seemed likely to be an exception."¹ With the final French onslaught La Haye Sainte was carried, the gallant German Legion being overwhelmed. But the distant squares still stood firm, while the French cavalry floundering among them looked "like heavy surf breaking on a coast beset with isolated rocks." "Will those English never show us their backs?" cried Napoleon; it was Soult who answered—"I fear they will be cut to pieces first."

The decisive movements occurred in the early afternoon, when an overwhelming attack of French infantry reached the British front, which the Belgians had deserted for safety in the forest. The Earl of Uxbridge, the commander of the cavalry, brought round the Union Brigade (Royals, Scots Greys and Inniskillings) and the Household Brigade by tracks not visible to the French, and fell on them like a thunderbolt. The shock sent them staggering, and as they turned, the cavalry, in a kind of Berserk delirium, pursued them furiously across the plain, right up to the great batteries and the French positions. This meant that they were there cut to pieces; perhaps 200 out of the 2000 survived to get back to their position; but as cavalry Uxbridge had destroyed his force. This, in truth, was the only "surging charge" of the day, but it had not "foamed itself away" without producing a profound and terrifying effect upon the French. "Gallop over them!" Ney, at Quatre Bras, had loftily commanded his cavalry leader; and "I shall go straight at them with my Old Guard," Napoleon had announced in the morning. But it was their own ranks which were galloped over.

Perhaps about 4.30 the distant sound of Prussian guns became faintly audible. Napoleon deluged the British crest with a still fiercer storm of shell and shot, and Ney led forward attack on attack, but always in vain. Out of the choking and blinding haze, the tumult of artillery and carnage, only a few incidents start to our knowledge. Once Picton led his infantry to charge in with the bayonet, to relieve two regiments from desperate odds, crying, "Twenty-eighth, remember Egypt!" (where the 28th once stood back to back and saved the day). Or as the Scots Greys thundered past the Gordons some of these caught at a stirrup and flew on foot into the *melée*. Or Wellington rode along the sorely thinned regiments which had lost their officers, and himself ordered them to

¹ Quoted in W. H. Fitchett's *How England saved Europe*, IV. There is a lively description of the Waterloo campaign in this volume.

form four deep and lie down in the lane, the scanty remnant of shelter. "Wherever danger threatened, there was the thoroughbred chestnut horse and the erect figure in the saddle . . . the keen grey eyes always alert, the mouth inflexibly firm and the expression unchangeably serene. . . . His mere presence diffused an atmosphere of calm and confidence and all who were aware of it thanked God and took courage. . . ." ¹

The final encounter was that of the Emperor's Guard (almost as legendary by this time as Charlemagne's Roland) with the survivors of the English Guards. The Duke had placed himself with them. Not till the French were within twenty yards would he give the word, then, "Now, Maitland! Now's your time!" (or, as some report, "Stand up, Guards!"). The sudden apparition of the long red line, pouring terrific volleys in their faces, stopped the Imperial Guard, of sheer physical necessity: the foremost fell, the rest staggered and broke. A pause in the cannonade, the ring of distant Prussian bugles, a sudden shaft of light, the first that day, from the setting sun; and Colborne led the 52nd in a bayonet charge at the reeling French, the Duke crying, "Go on! go on!"

Then, they say, he shut down his telescope and gave the last order—"Now every man left must advance." In the momentary gleam of light they could see him lifting his hat high in the air as a signal while Maitland's long-enduring Guards swept forward with fixed bayonets on the disordered enemy.

"The Guard gives way," was the cry among the French reserves—"Nous sommes trahis!" And their regiments dissolved.

Wellington's weary ranks reached the little inn, *La Belle Alliance*, which had been the centre of Napoleon's position, and there, about nine o'clock, he at last met Blücher, who had finally had to fight his way through a fierce resistance. The English were too utterly exhausted to be able to move any further, so that it fell to the incredulous Gneisenau to lead the Prussians on that remorseless chase in the moonlight, which convinced their nation, ever after, that it was they who had fought Waterloo. The plunder was all secured by them, Blücher taking Napoleon's travelling carriage, stuffed with jewels.

The defeated Emperor was hurried away and made for Paris, but he instantly discovered that Paris had no intention of resisting Europe for his sake, nor could he hope that Europe would a second time allow him to negotiate. Blücher had announced that he would "shoot him like a dog" if he caught him. Napoleon thought of flight to America and hastened to Rochefort, only to find the Bay of Biscay well patrolled by English frigates. All he could do was to make a merit of necessity and surrender to one of them, knowing that at least his life would be safe, and hoping that his skill in

¹ Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, Vol. X (now the principal authority for Waterloo). And see also his *Wellington*.

intrigue might win more; perhaps he might fascinate the Prince Regent as he had done Alexander I.

But the weak and theatrical Regent was not allowed to meet the magician, and English sailors and statesmen were no more impressionable than English soldiers. When Napoleon had opened the day of Waterloo by a magnificent review of his troops, our men had merely asked when they would stop play-acting and begin. Captain Maitland on the renowned *Bellerophon* (or *Billy Rough-un* as the sailors called it) treated the ex-Emperor simply as a distinguished prisoner and, with every politeness, kept him carefully watched. Ministers left him safely on board ship while Parliament passed a short Act—"for the more effectually detaining in custody Napoleon Buonaparté." The peace of Europe should not for a third time lie at his mercy: he was to live as a wealthy private person under supervision on the healthy and beautiful and distant island of St. Helena, his prison walls the surrounding ocean, the keys in the keeping of the sleepless Navy. So much for the policy of "conquering the sea by the land."

None of our Allies sought to share the invidious duty of keeping the great conqueror from further destructions; no one of them would have been trusted in the place of Great Britain; they were, besides, fully intent upon revenge and plunder. The Prussian army on the way to Paris had already exacted enormous 'supplies' from the population, although the British Government, in order to prevent such proceedings, was still paying millions over to her Allies. Once in Paris, the story is well known how Blücher intended to blow up the bridge of Jena (named after that celebrated Prussian defeat), and how Wellington, finding his remonstrances unheeded, kept always posted upon it a British sentry, with the desired effect.¹

Waterloo is possibly the last of the 'decisive battle days' known to our history. Never had the population waited for battle news in such universal anxiety. Long afterwards children and grandchildren were told how everyone knew that the great battle was coming: how from every village within reach of a coach-road the boys daily kept watch at some view-point for the coach; if there was news of victory it would be decorated: how at last, to the distant sound of wildly blowing horns, a lurching mass of green boughs rolled in sight. Then the yelling lads flew home with the news, so that when the dripping cattle and hoarse passengers drew up (in Petersfield) bells were pealing and flags waving.

The Duke of Wellington, in the eyes of all outside the British Parliament, is henceforth the supreme figure standing for the United Kingdom.

One of the greatest figures in European history, as well as our own, his fame has approximated to that curious fate of heroes who became legends. Like Charlemagne or Arthur, his greatness has

¹ There seems to be a rival Russian legend that Tsar Alexander saved the bridge, by posting upon it 'a Russian regiment.'

been taken for granted and small men have battered on what are represented as his 'mistakes.' The fashionable writers of the day exploited any acquaintance with him, and from Croker to Surgeon-General McGrigor they all can criticise him. Wellington regarded the war as one military whole. He appears in the distracted whirl of policies and intrigues as a unique Brain and Will watching the European war, determining his own aim and never swerving from it. To this grand object he subordinated everything else; he never committed the noble gesture of sacrificing the whole to the part; customs, courtesies and individuals did not weigh in the balance. Portugal was the necessary base of the Peninsular army; the Portuguese Government, therefore, must not be offended for the sake of an English officer's or merchant's personal rights. His army depended on its own mobility for its existence, therefore he might have to leave some hospital waggons behind.

Wellington always restrained his actual stroke to the utmost which his means could accomplish, no magnificent schemes calling for an extra army corps remain to 'dazzle' the eyes by 'splendid failures'; so completely did his plans fit together that their success appeared to English politicians either as pieces of wonderful 'luck,' or as matters of course which warranted them in relying on him to work miracles.

He did work the miracles, and they told each other how amazing it was that the great French generals had not 'taken advantage of' the 'risk' to which he had 'exposed' his army, "for we had no right to expect such a victory"; by which they signified not (as one perhaps might suppose) a tardy repentance for flouting his requirements as to officers and men, but an assumption that the 'invincible' Emperor, who had driven Austrians and Prussians before him, could only have been beaten by Britons through some extraordinary 'accident.'

Wellington learned early that he could rely only on what he himself controlled; he never 'made a mistake' or experienced 'bad luck' except when he reckoned on the English Ministry, or the Spanish patriots, to keep a pledged promise.

He relied upon his own judgment and his own remarkable reading of character. He was not, perhaps, a trainer of great generals, for he never could risk a regiment where Napoleon could sacrifice an army, but he trained and maintained for years a great army, and this twice over, in India and in Portugal. He did it by thinking out each movement for each department and exacting absolute obedience; he picked officers for special tasks and left them to accomplish the task untrammelled, but outside of that they were allowed no freedom. "This was a very singular trait in him," comments the excellent and devoted surgeon, McGrigor, who on one occasion 'discovered' two roads which Wellington had left blank of convoys, and thinking solely of getting to his wounded men, flatly disobeyed his orders by galloping the hospital transport

down them.¹ Like many other precious critics the doctor had never 'discovered' the Duke's invariable practice of keeping more roads open for his own troops than the enemy's. It was he, not the enemy, who determined the place of battle and never would he let them have it, like feudal champions, on a plain to suit cavalry; they had grand cavalry and thus had Napoleon taught his generals to win battles. Wellington had hardly any, and hardly any artillery, but he caused the officers to train the men as marksmen, not to fire 'till they saw the whites of the enemy's eyes,' and then each to shoot dead the man opposite to him. That combination of volleying and sharp-shooting made every soldier confident and every French regiment nervous. The fire of the thin red line became an impassable barrier and a national proverb.

(v) THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

The Congress of Vienna, 1814-15, occupied nine months in composing a settlement of Europe likely to be permanent. Eight Powers took part in the Congress, but 'the Four Great Powers' (Russia, Austria, Great Britain, Prussia) in reality settled everything though France, represented by the veteran diplomatist Talleyrand (whom Wellington and Castlereagh supported), obtained ample consideration.

The aims of the Congress were twofold: (1) To secure European peace by making territorial arrangements with a view to stability rather than to abstract ideas such as 'nationality' or 'liberty.' (2) To *satisfy* the principal claims of the Four Great Powers.

(1) As 'the Hundred Days' had shown the French nation to be still willing for war, the first necessity was a safeguard against a war of revenge. This the restored Bourbon King, Louis XVIII, was expected to manage, but it was seen that he would have little power if he were regarded by the French only as the embodiment of defeat. France, therefore, was very slightly penalised; Great Britain gave back almost the whole of the colonies she had conquered so brilliantly, and France retained the frontiers of 1790, except for a few fortresses restored to Savoy or Germany.

Next, in order to make a strong frontier against any possible French outbreaks a single kingdom was made of Holland and Belgium, and the long tract of tiny territories on the Rhine, which had always been so easy a prey for French armies, was assigned to considerable States which could garrison them, mostly to Prussia, some to Baden. To satisfy the claimants, Luxemburg was even divided, its military citadel given to Prussia, the rest to Holland. It did not occur to the peacemakers as any objection that Holland and Belgium had

¹ McGrigor's *Autobiography* is well worth study for the light it unintentionally throws on the war. Like all the diarists, he modestly confides to future generations that he really was the Duke's one trusted friend. Some vivid accounts of battles will be found in Fitchett's *Wellington's Men*.

for the past two centuries been devoted to opposed policies and opposed religions.

(2) The desires of the Great Powers were satisfied partly at the expense of those who had sided with Napoleon. There was a general nervousness at the great strength of Russia, but no one dared to deny what Alexander I demanded. Russia therefore kept Finland (once Swedish) and most of Poland. The last was to be a kingdom, 'independent' and 'constitutional,' but with Alexander for sovereign. Sweden was compensated for the loss of Finland by the gift of Norway, which had hitherto been under the Danish crown. This was regarded as a fair punishment for the Danish alliance with France: the Norwegians were not consulted. Sweden had lately added another page to her romantic history. The half-crazy but chivalrous Gustavus IV, who cherished a quixotic admiration for Marie Antoinette, had adhered to an alliance with Great Britain, very naturally, in face of the attacks of Russia and Denmark, but his unreasonable conduct had made it impossible to help him. The Swedes had at last revolted and deposed him (1809) and placed on the throne his dull old uncle, Charles XIII, the last of the royal line. They were determined not to permit a succession war and not to allow Russia to foment anarchy in their country. They therefore agreed to choose at once their future king and cause him to be adopted by Charles XIII and recognised by the entire nation. They sent a committee to select a sovereign from among the brilliant court round Napoleon; the committee chose Marshal Bernadotte, and the programme was carried out with complete success. Bernadotte accepted his fortune as Crown Prince and the new name of Charles (XIV) and, perceiving that Finland could not be torn from the Russian grasp, desired Norway, to gild his accession. He duly played his part of gratitude to the Powers by bringing troops to the Allied side in 1814.

Austria, not sorry to be rid of her embarrassing Belgic provinces, took back all her other old territories and kept as well all that Napoleon had bestowed at Campo Formio, and more. Lombardy, Venetia and the whole of Dalmatia, not forgetting the ancient little republic of Ragusa and the Montenegrin harbour of Cattaro, were now by the Congress confirmed to Austria, which thus became mistress of the Adriatic. The small States of Central Italy were also revived in order to be given to members of the Hapsburg family.

For the rest of Italy, the King of Sardinia recovered Savoy and Piedmont, and was rewarded with Genoa. The papal State was restored. Naples and Sicily were placed again under Bourbon sovereigns, but Sicily was robbed of its old independence and its new Constitution and compelled to submit to despotism. Switzerland was guaranteed in inviolable and perpetual neutrality, *i.e.* the new military roads made by Napoleon must not be utilised by troops, whether French, Italian or German. Austria had her own military road to Italy through Tyrol. In plain words, the Congress

used the excuse of safeguarding Europe against the military ambition of France to extinguish small States which had hitherto preserved their political independence, and to suppress constitutional organisation which might have preserved personal liberty from despotic tyranny.

Great Britain, which had been the paymaster of the Allies for so many years, made no claim for financial repayment but, according to the ideas of the eighteenth century, might consider herself recouped by the additional colonial possessions which she retained—Ceylon, the Cape of Good Hope, Demerara.

In the Mediterranean she retained Malta and was burdened with the protection of Corfu and the Ionian Isles. The limits of Hanover were increased, for the honour of the sovereign, and Heligoland remained British. The true satisfaction of Great Britain was not mentioned and the sole request which she actually made was as idealistic as any point in the *Rights of Man* or similar programmes, before or since. She requested, through her diplomatists, a general abolition of the Slave trade. To gratify her the Powers issued a unanimous condemnation of the trade in general terms, leaving to each State the decision how to proceed further. Only two, France and Portugal, decreed the abolition of slave-trading for their subjects. Denmark had already abolished it.

The true satisfaction of Great Britain lay in the silent acceptance of her maritime claims and system, and in her possession of maritime stations along all the great ocean ways of the world.

The details of the arrangements made were stated in a series of Treaties (the Vienna Treaties, 1814 or 1815); those for France were signed with Louis XVIII (Second Peace of Paris, 1815). The maintaining of the various Treaties would depend on the Four Powers and they agreed to keep on foot strong armies, Great Britain, her navy, so that France should see that resistance was hopeless, but that their four Governments should arrange a joint policy in peaceable diplomatic meetings. An attempt was being made to keep Europe quiet by *Congresses* without war at all, and as it was quite likely that, even if the French kept quiet, the populations whom they had revolutionised might not, the three autocrats of Russia, Austria, and Prussia agreed on the necessity of instantly repressing any threatenings of revolt. The erratic Tsar gave an astonishing form to this very natural agreement. He had become possessed by an hysterical religiosity and now publicly proclaimed that if the political system were conducted on Gospel principles there would be no revolutions. All that was necessary, in fact, was a change of heart. Let sovereigns become brothers and treat their subjects as their children.

The alliance of the three sovereigns was, and has always been, known as the *Holy Alliance* (1815). Alexander meant it to be a league of the sovereigns of all European nations, an international league for peace, acting by Congresses. Whatever they might

think, none dared to offend the Tsar, and almost every potentate submissively became a member. The exceptions comprised the Sultan of Turkey, who thought a new crusade was to be launched at him; the Pope, indignant at the arrogance of the Orthodox Russian; the King of Spain, whose infamous character placed him outside the society of respectable kings; and the Prince Regent of Great Britain, for whom Castlereagh deftly explained that the regrettable restrictions of a constitutional Government must prevent his royal master from pledging himself to anything more than sympathy. The sympathy was duly expressed by the Regent in a personal letter, but this country was not engaged to support the 'Holy Alliance.'

XXVIII

ENGLAND AFTER THE WAR

(i) PANIC AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

WHILE Great Britain was trying to defeat the land on the sea and in the process building a maritime empire, she was at home sinking into a condition of such distress and turbulence as might suggest that all the oppressions swept out of France had found a refuge here. The vision of a revolution of blood and fire, like that in France, scared politicians and officials, who, in their terror, became tyrannical, till younger men began to think that something like a Revolution would prove necessary if the nation was to be delivered from injustice, and the working class from the abject misery, which now engulfed them.

Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, Southey and Coleridge were among these young men, with many others who never became famous beyond their own homes or the students' societies of Oxford and Cambridge.¹

Even in time of peace it might have been difficult to steer the nation through the effects of those sweeping changes in agriculture and industry which have already been described. As it was, the long war fixed ministerial attention for twenty-five years on military and naval affairs, which absorbed most of the resources of the State, and internal problems were impatiently shelved to wait for 'better times.' Parliament could pass 500 Enclosure Acts but not one for succour of the poor. When at last Waterloo brought peace, the men who had been so long at the helm were incapable of altering their point of view and only knew how to repress riots, not how to solve difficulties.

During the entire period from the beginning of the war to the Reform Bill (1793-1832), almost the whole of the governing class and the larger part of the middle classes took for granted certain beliefs which produced a long pause in efforts towards improvement. And it is a distinctive feature of that age, and of most of the century following, that great deference was paid to abstract principles, from which the programmes of practical conduct were derived. This

¹ Mrs. Sandford's *Tom Poole and His Friends* supplies a lively picture of the conditions in a country town, of young Coleridge, Southey and Wordsworth, and of a young Radical gradually turning into a hard-working overseer of the poor.

attitude of mind was not, of course, in itself new, but it was in strong contrast to the system of the earlier eighteenth century.

(1) The governing class was as firmly convinced as ever was Sir Robert Walpole that any alterations, even the smallest, in the mode of government would be dangerous to the national safety and "the sacred rights of property," and would encourage "a French temper," by which was meant a temper of destruction and massacre. In consequence the majority were indignant at such proposals as to permit Roman-catholics to sit in Parliament or to bestow members on Birmingham and Manchester. The same dread of all change prevented even financial reform, because anybody who spoke against waste, sinecures or corruption must be a revolutionary attacking the Constitution.

(2) The newly fashionable philosophy of *Political Economy* was now professed by most thinkers and talkers who exerted any parliamentary influence. This new philosophy was constructed, in the main, by Scottish thinkers inspired by French philosophers, of whom the greatest was Quesnay (*died* 1774). Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776) is the epoch-making book of this School. It convinced Pitt, who taught Parliament, that the treatment which commerce had received from Government during the past two centuries was mistaken: that trade was hampered by old regulations which therefore had better be abolished: the more freedom, the more commerce. "*Laissez-faire!*" the French economists had cried, meaning, leave commerce unrestricted by needless rules and fines. The English economists adopted the phrase in the sense of "let alone," believing that the acute self-interest of every man would prompt him for his own advantage more wisely than the wisest official of a government.

The general principle of *Laissez-faire* captivated people. Nature and human nature, it seemed, would be sure to work out the best results in commercial matters if left untrammelled. It was a learned revival of the 'noble savage' sentiment.

Most welcome was such a theory to over-tasked magistrates and anxious ministers, as well as to self-confident commercial men, and it had the advantage that, reduced to its simplest form, it could be accepted by thousands who were never at the pains to think beyond the catch-words. Such a principle appeared to be a scientific—nay, almost a moral justification alike of the landowner who raised rent to the highest figure possible, the millowner who beat wages down to the lowest figure possible, and the tranquil and comfortable middle classes who accepted as inevitable the miserable condition of 'the poor,' along with the security of their own good incomes.

(ii) THE INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM

Before the *Laissez-faire* theory had become popular the poverty-stricken condition of workmen under the new *factory system* had occasioned a few attempts in Parliament to remedy their distress.

The Act of North's Ministry which had fixed a 'minimum wage' for the silk-workers of Spitalfields had satisfied those silk-spinners, but did nothing for Coventry or Macclesfield. It supplied a standard, however, and to obtain a similar law became the ideal of the weavers in wool, cotton and linen. For twenty-five years the workpeople of Lancashire, Yorkshire and Durham petitioned and agitated till Pitt, in 1799, sanctioned a Bill of the kind. It nearly became law, but was defeated in the Lords by Lord Chancellor Loughborough, whose peculiar delight was to work against his chief on the sly. In lieu of it Pitt provided an Act for Arbitration between employers and employed which for a few years worked well, till the lawyers discovered a technical loophole which enabled the magistrates to refuse to administer the law except for one man at a time, which made it worthless.

During the war all the evils of the new industrial system grew worse. Factories increased very rapidly, to provide clothing and munitions. Factory owners became enormously rich; in the Stroud valley they thrived on contracts for uniforms for Wellington's men, and in the West Riding on orders for Napoleon's army of Russia—this, of course, by means of organised smuggling on a huge scale via Heligoland.

But the prosperity of the millowner seldom reached his hands; he employed greater numbers but not at higher wages although food was scarce and dear all the time. The provisioning of fleets and armies exhausted the supplies and imported corn could not always be procured, especially when the Baltic was involved in war. The export of huge quantities of money, whether as subsidies to allies or for our own armies, produced a dearth of coin. Scarcity and high prices encouraged landowners to devote more and more of the open pasture-land, and even gardens, to corn-growing. Many a barren hillside, from Hampshire to Yorkshire, was enclosed and ploughed, only to prove worthless to the luckless farmer. Cattle and geese were evicted but very little wheat resulted. The population, too, had become more dependent than before on *baker's bread*, i.e. on wheat; probably the employment of so many women in the factories caused neglect of the proper cooking of oatmeal, which, both as porridge and clap-bread, had hitherto been the mainstay of Northern England.

The cold and hungry workmen struggled resolutely to extract better treatment from their masters. They joined in clubs and by strikes tried to get higher wages and fewer fines for mistakes. But Parliament, suspecting a French Revolution, viewed any kind of association as a conspiracy and every remonstrance as a hint of massacre and republicanism.

Pitt himself, though far less timid than his party, had thought it wise to guard against such organised action as strikes, and had therefore carried an Act to forbid all *combinations* among working men (1799–1800). This made clubs and joint agreements illegal

and all unanimous action by employees was taken by magistrates to imply a *combination*.

The factory hands, therefore, after 1800 had no way of resisting alterations of wages, with the result that every difficulty among the employers, whether caused by war risks or by over-competition among themselves, was reflected in lower pay or longer hours. And such difficulties continually occurred. The ruin and panic of 1810 has already been mentioned. The British *Orders in Council* levelled at Napoleon made things worse by offending the United States, which replied by a decree of *Non-intercourse* with Great Britain, and the loss of that great market ruined many millowners and left their hands starving. Even when the good harvest of 1813 provided unusual plenty, which for the time quieted the poor town-folk, the low prices ruined so many farmers that banks failed all over the country, 240 in three years (1814-16), and this again depressed business, and then wages were again lowered.

Deprived of all hope of improvement, it was not strange that the artisans at last took to violence. In the Midlands especially they were driven frantic by slow starvation. The bitter winter of 1811-12, followed by a burning summer with terrifying and destructive storms, produced actual famine; finally, an extraordinary comet, "half as large as the moon, with its broad train streaming down to the horizon," scared the villagers of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Robbery and assaults increased, houses were broken into and the inhabitants sometimes murdered. The introduction of some new machines called 'frames,' for hosiery and lace-making in Nottingham, Leicester and Derby, provided the workers of those shires with a definite object. They knew that the frames were to supersede their own handwork, and with a general impulse gangs of desperate men set upon buildings containing the new machines and wrecked or burned them. They used the name of 'Ned Lud' or 'King Lud' as a password and therefore were termed *Luddites*.

The riots spread to the West Riding, South Lancashire and Cheshire. Mills were burned in Manchester, Huddersfield, Leeds and Bradford. Sheffield was invaded by an immense mob which compelled the flour-dealers to sell their stocks at 3s. a stone (it had been at the famine price of 7s.) and then cleared the town of metal to make bullets. Leaden pumps and spouts and old church roofs were being carried off everywhere for this sinister purpose, arms were seized from depots and shops and more than one obnoxious employer was shot down by men in ambush. Everywhere persons of property shut up their houses like forts and watched through the nights; mobs stoned the mail-coaches lest soldiers should be on them. Seven regiments were sent to the disturbed districts, where-upon the Luddites invited the United Irishmen to come over and join them.

These riots were really a social rising, but ministers treated them

as a political rebellion and by their conduct almost produced one. Surrounded by soldiers, the judges conducted continuous assizes and the persons caught were condemned to death. New Acts made the breaking of machines a capital crime and empowered magistrates to search for arms, to order meetings to disperse and to exercise summary jurisdiction, any resistance being punishable with transportation or execution. It was found that the most respectable persons, if they had undertaken to negotiate with an employer on behalf of the workpeople, or had joined with two or three friends to make a representation to a magistrate or a member of Parliament, might be accused of conspiracy and heavily punished.

Lord Sidmouth, the Home Secretary, had no policy but to urge the magistrates and officers to promptitude and severity. A friend, perceiving that he had no knowledge of the true condition of the poor, took him a drive through several poverty-stricken villages. The minister's kind heart was touched—"Poor creatures!" he cried. "But can nothing be done for them?" The House of Commons accepted tranquilly the explanation of a junior minister, Lamb (afterwards Lord Melbourne), that it was "impossible" for the general distress "to receive any relaxation under the present unavoidable system," and that, in consequence, the fear of death was necessary to keep the people in order. Nevertheless the Ministry and the military together could not put down this industrial insurrection. The Luddites developed a kind of guerilla tactics. When troops reached one place they betook themselves to another. They marched in bands, dressed, perhaps in army overcoats carried off from some factory, or disguised as women, or in masks. They would rendezvous at night on the moors, in some cave or lonely dale, such as Lud's church on the Derbyshire moors. The prisoners taken never betrayed their comrades. The sight of half a score of Luddites hanged together did not intimidate the rest. But a lull occurred in 1814 on the news of peace, and the reopening of commerce and the good harvest of the year before provided more plentiful food, and therefore a cessation of riots, so that the magnificent rejoicings in London over the Peace of 1814 were undisturbed by popular commotions, and concealed from continental critics the threatening condition of this nation.

The Prince Regent had invited his royal Allies to celebrate the joint victory and entertained them and their ministers and generals with all the extravagant and tasteless splendour he so much loved. The Austrian and Russian Emperors, and the Kings of Prussia, Holland and Sweden beheld with amazement the enormous crowds which peaceably thronged the streets. No other government in Europe would have dared to permit such multitudes to assemble in so wealthy a city.

(iii) THE POOR LAW IN THE COUNTRY (TO 1834)

Even before the outbreak of the war in 1793 it had become clear that unless the country parishes were to be totally depopulated, the inhabitants, bereft of their old home industries and of most of their common pasture, must be maintained by other means than their own earnings. Many of the great landlords provided free meals, usually of a nutritious soup, made in huge quantities. Soup had never been a popular English food, and as a ration condescendingly bestowed by those who were lapped in luxury it naturally was odious. It was this age which fixed a stigma on the word 'charity,' as signifying doles given in condescension by superiors to inferiors.

The other way of keeping life in the labouring population was by the legal and compulsory method of the *Poor Rate*.

By the old Elizabethan and Stewart laws, every parish was bound to feed its poor and ought to have a poor-house to receive the aged and sick, and a workhouse where the able-bodied could be employed and the children taught to work. The Elizabethan system had been honestly tried in all parts of England, but the great expense consequent on the increase of population had caused it gradually to become neglected except in places large enough to manage it on a business system (as Manchester, Preston, Leeds), or lucky enough to have a rich and energetic squire who saw to it himself, as in several places in Somerset.¹

A fresh Act in 1722 gave overseers the power to combine parishes together to provide a joint workhouse for the feeble, and to distribute the able-bodied paupers among employers as workers at a low wage—called 'farming' them.

This last plan was the easiest to carry out, but as there were often more paupers than employment, the overseers had to press the farmers to take the men on by sanctioning a very low wage indeed.

In consequence there were numbers of families in every parish which could not by all their toil earn food and shelter. Shelburne's Government provided a fresh law, Gilbert's Act (1782), which permitted any parish, or group of parishes, to employ a *paid guardian* of the poor. This guardian was legally obliged to find work for any unemployed poor person who applied, and if necessary to supplement the wages out of the rates. At the same time it was forbidden to remove the sick poor on plea of their original 'settlement' to some distant parish, a proceeding which had often resulted in shocking cruelty for the sake of avoiding expense. On the other hand, the wilfully idle were to be punished.

This Act had two effects. (1) The overseers and guardians in many kindly places used to bestow so much 'outdoor relief' (or doles) as heavily burdened the ratepaying parishioners. (2) Several parishes would join to form a *Union* for the relief of the poor in a large workhouse, maintained by a joint rate on the combined parishes.

¹ See for one instance Hylton's *History of Kilmersdon*.

The workhouses took some time to build, and as the prospect of being practically imprisoned in one was appalling to the freedom-loving, home-keeping English, the poor began to call them, with ominous reference to events in France, "the bastilles."

Pitt had so little comprehension of the real state of the poor that he caused a proposal made by Whitbread for a *minimum wage* for country labourers to be thrown out in the Commons at once (1795). He said it would be better to reform the Poor Law, but he never achieved his ideal. Yet he had carried an Act (1796) to encourage the growth of population by allowing local authorities to give a bounty to the labourer with a large family, the labourer's wage being then but 1s. a day, while the gallon loaf (over 8½ lbs.) cost 1s. 1d.

Acts of Parliament provided no funds for the paupers and there were small farmers and shopkeepers and other hardworking middle-class folk who found that rates as high as their rents, and added to the war taxes, were crushing them into penury. In 1795 the magistrates of Berkshire agreed to frame a system for their whole county during "the present crisis," and from their meeting being held at Speenhamland their arrangement, which was widely copied, is known as the 'Speenhamland law.'

These justices unanimously agreed that the poor required more assistance, and they consequently (a) besought farmers and other employers to pay higher wages, and overseers to set them to growing potatoes on common lands, and (b) ordered the parochial officers to see that every poor industrious man should get a minimum wage, or else a dole, to fit the price of bread. They laid down a clear rule: If the gallon loaf cost 1s., the labourer must have 3s. a week for himself and 1s. 6d. for each member of his family. If the loaf cost more the sums must increase automatically. In consequence, when rural wages fell below this scale (as they too often did) the balance was paid out of the rates. Nobody could point out a better plan, since no respectable body could be so jacobinical as to suggest lower rents, or so un-economical as to legislate for better wages, and the Speenhamland system was widely copied in other counties.

The total result was a miserable subsistence for the poor, badly performed labour, still lower wages and still heavier rates.

All the time the true mode of dealing with agricultural misery was being demonstrated by a few public-spirited landlords¹ who, revoking for themselves the Enclosure system, allotted pasture-land or gardens to the labouring men at tiny rents, and with the most excellent results. But the legislators were deaf and blind to facts at home. They were possessed by the terror of republicanism and content to believe that bad conditions would in some way, some day, right themselves.

This hope the patient labourers also cherished till, after Waterloo,

¹ As Lords Winchilea in Rutland, Egremont in Yorkshire, Carrington in Lincolnshire, and many squires in the south-west.

their expectation that "this critical time" was over was promptly dashed by the announcement of the Government (Liverpool, Castle-reagh and Sidmouth) that war taxation must continue, and by a *Corn Bill* which forbade importation of foreign corn unless the price of grain rose to 80s. the quarter—a famine price. Canadian corn was, indeed, excepted, but no large supply could as yet come thence. This really meant the artificial maintenance of the high price of bread in order to keep up the prosperity of farmers, or, rather, to keep up the rents they were paying, and it was fiercely resented as an injustice. Riots began in the eastern counties as well as in the East End of London, and ricks were burned that farmers and landlords might lose their profits, since the poor (as it appeared) were to be starved by their prices. This was not very surprising, for, as Cobbett had the audacity to write (in 1826), it was a mockery to prate of the 'liberty' of 'honest and industrious men' when they "can be compelled to starve quietly, whether at once or by inches, with old wheat ricks and fat cattle under their eye." And long before Cobbett, a Chief Justice of Henry VI had boasted that though a Frenchman might starve without robbing his neighbour, 'an Englishman is of another courage.'

The only outlet now remaining for his courage was poaching. The preserving of large quantities of hares and pheasants had become increasingly fashionable from the middle of the eighteenth century, and was regarded, indeed, as the mark of the gentleman's social rank. A series of Acts (1770 to 1817) inflicted grievous punishments for anyone caught in a wood with a stick or a net. "It is better to be hanged than to be starved to death," was the reply of the famished men, who saw their wives and children slowly perishing of hunger. They would go out together in organised parties, kill a quantity of game and sell it at high prices to poulterers' agents. For there was a great demand in the towns for game, while a strict convention and a law of 1817 forbade any gentleman to sell his game. The poulterers, therefore, got regular supplies from countrymen, who poached the parks at night. If a band of game-keepers met them, violence resulted, and hanging or transportation followed.

Transportation to the far regions of Australia, then believed to be wholly desert, was the new punishment resorted to by magistrates in order to avoid executions, not because they thought death too cruel a penalty, but because juries shrank from convicting. As a rule the death penalty was pronounced and instantly commuted to transportation for a term of years.

The temper of the Government was reflected by the magistracy and the well-to-do classes as a whole. They both feared and despised the labouring men, whom they spoke of as 'the hands,' 'the lower classes,' or 'the mob.' They might feel pity, but no shame at beholding their misery. In a time when the gentle and noble classes were richer than ever before, they beat down wages till the parish

wage for a man's work all day was 2s. 6d. the week. Sometimes overseers even tried to discourage the starving men from claiming the legal dole by making it as difficult or degrading as possible to do so.

Fresh parish regulations steadily pushed the dole of food or money lower and lower, and every fresh law increased the severity of punishments.

In 1830 at last breaking point was reached. As with the industrial workers a few years earlier, the final straw was the invention of some machines to do work formerly done by labourers. Threshing had been hitherto their most regular employment and lasted for several months of winter, and the threshing machines were expected to obtain perhaps 10 per cent. more grain out of the corn, but to take several months' work and wages from the poor labourers.¹

In despair, parties of men set out to destroy them, not without secret sympathy from some of the old-fashioned farmers. A general agricultural rising slowly spread from Kent westwards to Wilts, the poor people almost everywhere observing a wonderful self-restraint.

They destroyed threshing machines, they required promises of better, but still very moderate, wages, and they often asked for small sums of money, a shilling or a few pence, for their present urgent need. When they obtained the promise of farmer, parson or squire, they were satisfied, expecting due fulfilment.

But the punishment which was visited upon them was wholly unexpected. As with the 'Luddites,' special commissions of judges tried batches of prisoners and sentenced to transportation men and even boys who, perhaps, were only proved to have asked for beer or a few pence. Sentence of transportation was usually 'for seven years,' but as the convict had no chance of returning home again, it was really a sentence of exile for life, and in circumstances which meant to the vast majority prolonged hardship and even torment, and which meant to their families starvation or lifelong pauperism. Parliament and the magistracy indeed procured the silence of despair and called it order.

(iv) COERCION

Under the system of Liverpool, Castlereagh and Sidmouth great courage was required to advocate any reform. The Tory party had now accepted a programme of discouraging and putting down any and every kind of agitation. Liverpool, as Prime Minister, was chiefly concerned to keep his Government permanently in office; with Castlereagh's assistance he could sufficiently satisfy the Prince Regent (who in 1820 became King George IV). He satisfied his colleagues by leaving them a free hand in their respective depart-

¹ Flail threshing was still used in parts of Lancashire and Somerset near the end of the nineteenth century.

ments and so earned the praise of being "able to work with men who disagreed with him."

Sidmouth, as Home Secretary, encouraged by Castlereagh, was officially responsible for the harshness of this arbitrary Government. Every form of theft was already punishable by death. In 1812 breaking a machine was added to the list.

In 1817 an Act against Seditious Meetings empowered any justice of the peace to forbid beforehand any meeting which he considered would be 'seditious.' Another Act suspended the Habeas Corpus Act so that continued imprisonment without trial could be inflicted by the warrant of any justice. These acts made punishment prompt and severe but still did not prevent the expression of misery. At this very time there were hunger-riots in the eastern counties (1816), a fresh Luddite rising in Derbyshire (1817) and a pitiful attempt by the starving cotton operatives of Manchester to march to London and tell their wrongs to the Regent. Each of those poor men carried a rug or 'blanket' to sleep in at night, and several hundred actually set out, totally ignorant of the distance to be covered. But the 'blanketeers' march' lasted only three days, for they met with little sympathy from the terrified and starving villagers along their route and were driven home by hunger.

The ministers supposed that such ignorant attempts to fly in the face of 'the principles of political economy' resulted from the writings of men who advocated reform or blamed the Government, and they endeavoured to silence such writers by actions for libel. The judge could pronounce a sentence as severe as he liked provided that the jury gave a verdict of guilty. But this the jury would not always do, and in order to get rid of the need of a trial, Sidmouth actually issued a *Circular* to the Lords Lieutenant of counties to inform them that magistrates could arrest or imprison anybody *accused of libel* (1817). This suspension of the right of trial by jury was too much even for the Tories, and the minister was compelled by the House of Commons to withdraw his circular, while at the same time, at the famous trial of Hone the bookseller, a London jury proved its independence of Chief Justice Ellenborough by a verdict 'not guilty.' The acquittal of Hone was due to his own courage and ability. He was a studious old second-hand bookseller, who astounded the court by defending himself with great learning and simple fearlessness, calmly proving Ellenborough's bullying to be beside the point, and his assertions incorrect.

To the discredit flung on the conduct of justice was added the discredit of the Government by the exposure of its method of using spies. The Home Office had long employed spies to mingle with workmen suspected of harbouring discontented ideas and to report to Government agents. As they were rewarded for their discoveries they took to encouraging and even tempting men to engage in meetings which might be called seditious, and sometimes they would swear false information against perfectly innocent persons. Probably

nothing so scandalous has ever been perpetrated by the guardians of English justice. The employment of spies as provocative agents was not known at once, of course, but it was known that the Government appointed secret committees, in both Houses (1817, 1818), to deal with 'sedition,' and in 1813 the system of provocative spying was exposed in the evidence during a trial and stirred universal disgust.

But it was extremely puzzling to see in what manner any protest could be made. The troops in the country were at the disposal of Government, and although the private soldiers in the infantry regiments might sympathise with the working men, it was hardly likely that they would dare to mutiny if they were ordered to fire upon a crowd. In any case, the local Government—that is, the Lord Lieutenant of the county and the county magistracy—could be sure of support from the local mounted force known as the *Yeomanry* of each county, for the members of that force were drawn from the farming and professional classes, and were likely to be afraid of the poor rioters and in sympathy with the governing classes. Crowds, then, could accomplish nothing by attempts at force.

Inside Parliament the case seemed equally hopeless. There were a few who called themselves *Radical* reformers, and this handful of eccentric members who ventured to move resolutions in the House were protected by their parliamentary privilege. But Sir Francis Burdett and Admiral Cochrane, popular though they might be with the mob, and gallant and unselfish themselves, were hardly men of a character to inspire confidence. Brougham, the able lawyer, was intent on carving his own political career, and the high-minded Sir Samuel Romilly was an idealist with a very small following. For though the Grey and Grenville Whigs could make their votes felt when the Libel Act of Fox was threatened, they had no sympathy with the poverty-stricken masses who attacked "the sacred rights of property." Nor was there much prospect that time would alter the action of Government. Whig or Tory, the great families controlled the elections in all but a few constituencies.

It seemed, then, that after all it was outside Parliament that the campaign of reform had first to be waged, and the man who more than any other educated the people to comprehend the need and possibility of reform was William Cobbett, who might perhaps be called the Burke of the masses.

Cobbett was one of a typical agricultural family, his father a small farmer in the little town of Farnham. There was no elementary school there in his childhood, but in his father's childhood there had been, and he had taught his children to read and think. William Cobbett's strength of character and physique prompted him to go his own way, and after trying in boyhood several occupations he enlisted, and during eight years as private and non-commissioned officer (his regiment being stationed at Chatham or in Nova Scotia) he found the opportunities for self-education which he desired.

During a subsequent eight years in the United States, he experimented as author and publisher, and championed the fame and credit of England till he made New England too hot to hold him and came home, here persistently to praise the liberty and happiness of the United States, untaxed and ungoverned. For while the militarism and brutalities of the French revolutionaries had early converted Wordsworth and Southey into steady Toryism, Cobbett was converted by the harshness of the English government into an ardent advocate of reform.

At this period books and newspapers were highly in fashion with all classes, and the market was not yet glutted. Cobbett's newspaper, the *Weekly Political Register*, began in 1802 and quickly earned the reputation of being the most reliable and most racy of the regular London journals. A strong interest in agriculture, and a slight acquaintance with a wide range of topics, from America to etymology, an absolute self-confidence and tireless pugnacity, made his paper as entertaining as it was informing. His vigorous style was easy to read, and when he came forward as the spokesman of the workmen and peasantry, exposing the abuses practised by capitalists and politicians, his paper circulated all over England and became at once the political organ and political education of the masses. At first parties of working men would subscribe to buy a copy, for its price was the then usual one of 1s. But it was found that if one of them read it aloud to the others the Sedition or Combination laws were infringed. Cobbett then boldly lowered his price to 2d., whereupon the immense increase of the circulation determined the Government to silence him somehow, so when the Habeas Corpus Act was next suspended (1817) he fled to America, for he had already been twice accused of libel, found guilty and condemned to such heavy fines as had ruined him.

But he returned next year to publish more *Registers*, to ridicule the Government and clamour for the reduction of the taxes which were ruining the farmers and small gentry for the benefit—as Cobbett declared—of great personages and their pensioned families, or of the stockbrokers, pawnbrokers and manipulators of capital generally. He never ceased to repeat that the system, *the thing*, must be changed if the nation was to be governed better. Dissolution of Parliament and changes of ministers wrought no difference in the attitude of the ruling class. The same men, or families, composed the two Houses, their attention was fixed on the high politics of Europe or on their own dignity and emoluments, all between was negligible or to be suppressed.

Cobbett's vehemence and inconsistencies were typical of the agitation. He thought it enough to declare that there *ought not* to have been a war or a National Debt, and that therefore taxes *ought* to be abolished. But though he laid down the law with equal stoutness on topics which he understood or of which he was wholly ignorant, the frankness with which he recanted when he found out

his mistakes was more captivating than accuracy. He held up as his standard the securing a better share in the national well-being for the agricultural labourer, the natural liberty of the Englishman in speech and private action, and, though necessarily in veiled language, the need of a Parliament which should not be a mere instrument for the endowment of the great families. He was a bold defender of all that he held peculiarly English—commons, woods, hares and hounds, horses and fox-hunting, bacon and white bread and ale, and an unwearied denouncer of all he disliked.

He detested and steadily abused taxes and stockbrokers, Jews and Quakers, dissenting chapels and charity schools. He admired and praised the Church, but habitually scoffed at the clergy. He seems to have been the inventor of the famous myth that the Church of England was 'made by Parliament' and that her clergy are 'paid by the State.' He never lost a chance of venting his scorn of tea, 'the effeminate drink,' of potatoes, 'the lazy root,' which he vowed was driving out the cultivation of corn, or of porridge, which he assured the southern counties was a water gruel on which the wage-slaves of the north were fed by their masters.

It is probable that he was as successful in discrediting porridge and charity schools, or in slandering the Church, as in spreading the agitation for reform. This demand was already being heard in 1816–20, within Parliament itself, though by universally contemptuous hearers, and outside of it at such times and places as permitted the *Radical Reformers* to get a hearing. They advocated annual Parliaments, to prevent bribery and influence; and manhood suffrage, without qualification of property; and voting by ballot, to protect the voter from being bullied.

It is not surprising that the proposal to reform the mode of electing members should have become popular. The more impatient agitators, of whom a man known as Orator Hunt is typical, supposed that rebellious demonstrations might intimidate Government, and as soon as the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act ceased they organised meetings in the factory districts, of which the Manchester Reform meeting, August 1819, is the most famous. It was announced beforehand and contingents from Yorkshire and from many Lancashire towns marched long distances to join in it.

The Manchester magistrates did not know what to do. The Manchester constables were celebrated and feared in the north, but they were too small a handful to cope with the crowds assembling. So they sent for the local Yeomanry and asked for the Hussars from Cheshire. The magistrates let the throng assemble while they hesitated. The place of meeting, a few fields, known as St. Peter's fields, among the houses on the edge of the town, was soon close packed. Then the magistrates ordered the constables to arrest Hunt, but as they could not reach him the mounted Yeomanry were told to press in among the crowd. It was so dense that they came to a standstill; then the Hussars were ordered to *charge*, to rescue

the Yeomanry. In the horrible crush some hundreds were injured, though hardly any were actually slain by the military. This "Manchester massacre" was promptly dubbed '*Peterloo*' by the populace. It was the last attempt for some years at public protest against the tyranny of the Government.

The Ministry now framed stricter laws against meetings, known as the *Six Acts* (December 1819). They provided stronger penalties for seditious libel, made all political meetings criminal, forbade civilians to drill, empowered magistrates to confiscate weapons and have houses searched, and made pamphlets pay the heavy *stamp duty* which already taxed newspapers.

Under these severe acts no more meetings, seditious or other, were likely to be held, but at this moment a fresh cause of agitation suddenly presented itself, which diverted attention from the social struggle for many months, in the scandalous contention between George IV and his wife, Queen Caroline.

DESCRIPTION OF BRITISH TAXATION

By the Rev. Sydney Smith in the *Edinburgh Magazine*, 1820.

"Taxes upon every article which enters into the mouth, or covers the back, or is placed under the foot—taxes upon everything which it is pleasant to see, hear, feel, smell or taste—taxes upon warmth, light and locomotion—taxes on everything on earth, and the waters under the earth—on everything that comes from abroad, or is grown at home—taxes on the raw material—taxes on every fresh value that is added to it by the industry of man—taxes on the sauce which pampers man's appetite, and the drug that restores him to health—on the Ermine which decorates the judge and the rope which hangs the criminal—on the poor man's salt and the rich man's spice—on the brass nails of the coffin and the ribands of the bride—at bed or board, couchant or levant, we must pay. The schoolboy whips his taxed top—the beardless youth manages his taxed horse, with a taxed bridle, on a taxed road—and the dying Englishman, pouring his medicine, which has paid 7 per cent., into a spoon that has paid 15 per cent., flings himself back upon his chintz bed, which has paid 22 per cent.—and expires in the arms of an apothecary who has paid a licence of a hundred pounds for the privilege of putting him to death. His whole property is then immediately taxed from 2 to 10 per cent. Besides the probate, large fees are demanded for burying him in the chancel; his virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble, and he is then gathered to his fathers—to be taxed no more."

XXIX

NEW PRINCIPLES (1760-1830)

(i) EVANGELICAL, PHILANTHROPIC AND BENTHAMITE IDEAS

THE leaven of fresh thought was at work more vigorously in the un-official than in the official part of the nation in the latter part of the eighteenth century. For at least half a century after Walpole's time the Church in its official aspect appears to be little in touch with the real currents of religious life. This was the natural result of treating the Church as a department of Government. Bishops appointed because they were sound Whigs, or members of great families, or perhaps for having shown a bent towards Calvinism or rationalism which gratified the leading schools of dissent, were in hardly any sense representative of their clergy, and the suppression of Convocation ensured the clergy being silent. Of the parochial clergy, as of all English society at that time, there may be said to have been different classes. The wealthier incumbents, gentlemen of means and taste who probably held several livings, were not expected to reside in their parishes but to provide curates for them, on the Tudor and mediaeval plan, from among the poorer graduates of Oxford or Cambridge. Such poor clergy were expected to support life on a salary of £40 with the parsonage house to live in, though if the curate would attend to two parishes he was allowed rather more: in any case it was he who was important to the parishioners. The holding of more than one living was frankly defended precisely because so many were of small value: there was no other way of providing comfortably for a gentleman in Holy Orders.

In the world of county families portrayed by Jane Austen the young gentleman who takes Orders to hold a family living is regarded as unusually high-minded if he goes to live there.

The practice by the highest ranks of society of an essentially pagan life, together with the adoption of the *laissez-faire* doctrine by all who professed to be thinkers, helped to produce a general indifference to anything but material ends. The tone of political life was not lower than the tone of fashionable society in general, for the increase of affluence had not raised the moral standard. Nevertheless, in unfashionable Society there were counter-movements which were destined eventually to come to the visible surface. The most definite step towards a rebuilding of decency

and Christianity among the neglected classes was the establishment of volunteer schools for children on Sundays, where they might acquire some principles of Christian morals and by learning to read become able to read the Bible. In the country they were maintained by the squire's family, in the towns by charitable members of the middle classes. But there was a conscientious opposition to so sensational a novelty; there were persons who suspected that Sunday Schools might withdraw the young from the time-honoured 'catechising' enjoined on clergy and parishioners at 'the afternoon service,' although that old institution was now nearly extinct. There were more who declared that to give schooling to 'the lower orders' would encourage in them an unsubmitive temper and unfit them for work. A compromise, therefore, was gravely agreed upon—the children might be taught to read but not to write. Gloucester was the cradle of the Sunday School system, its founders being the clergyman, Stock, and the bookseller, Raikes. In London the Rev. Rowland Hill introduced the first schools and convinced Bishop Porteous of their utility, who then promoted them in his great diocese. They were also spreading rapidly in many of the manufacturing towns, where they vigorously flourished, for both children and adults, throughout the nineteenth century.

The Sunday Schools were not entirely a Church movement, but were carried on by help of many lay men and women animated by a temper of *philanthropy* (a fresh word being necessary now that 'charity' had acquired a narrower meaning), and the Quakers and other Nonconformists worked steadily on the same lines.

But there was a fervent movement of rekindled religious devotion within the Church, previous to and apart from philanthropy, and known as the *Evangelical Movement*. There is no separating the history of this movement from that of Wesley. It was primarily a reform among educated and thoughtful people, led by certain clergy of whom the Venns, father and son, were among the earliest. Its greatest leader was Charles Simeon, of Cambridge, a man whose devout earnestness at first irritated, but then impressed, his colleagues and pupils at King's College. When he became vicar of St. Mary's, the principal church, his severity actually terrified his parishioners. But eventually his earnestness overcame prejudice and his evangelistic preaching, sorely needed in that pagan age, made Cambridge the centre of a clerical movement, guided by himself for half a century (1783–1836). From Cambridge the Evangelical churchmen carried their influence to many other districts. All of them placed great emphasis upon the exact language of the Bible, and their biblical phraseology and strict gravity of behaviour as well as of morals recalled the old puritan manner as strongly as their insistence on calvinist dogma. Henry Venn was one of the first leaders in London of this school of thought. He had come from a west-country vicarage, where his father (of an old Somerset puritan

family) was a noted High Churchman. In London in the 'fifties he became an Evangelical. He was curate of Clapham, where his son John afterwards was vicar, and so many serious men went for two generations to live in that country village, in order to profit by the ministry of the Venns, as to make the district a suburb of London and to obtain for their school of thought the nickname of 'the Clapham sect.' The best known figure of the whole company was William Wilberforce, whose wealth, eminent friends and lovable character gave him the position of an acknowledged leader. One of his friends was the vigorous Hannah More, whose zeal he fired and who became widely known as an advocate of Sunday Schools and a writer of simple religious pamphlets, or *tracts*.

It was among the evangelical Society of Clapham that Wilberforce acquired his two famous convictions—of the iniquity of the slave trade and also of the necessity of stamping upon the English Sunday the rigid observance of Puritans and Jews. As the tireless protagonist of the anti-slave-trade crusade he was revered even by an 'impartial' House of Commons. As the life and soul of a society for expelling recreation from Sunday (and with more success than Chief Justice Richardson two centuries earlier) he was detested by the poor. Cobbett used to speak of him as the chief of hypocrites, and the injustice of the charge does not obscure the fact that Wilberforce and his genuinely pious circle regarded everything from a sectional or, rather, a class point of view. What they felt to be right for themselves must be right for all. They attached supreme importance to calvinist doctrine and to their own dogmas of the quietude of 'the Sabbath' and the verbal inspiration of the Old and New Testaments, and they insisted on these as necessary to salvation. With regard to temporal concerns, they seem to have to some extent shared the doctrine of Pope, that 'whatever is, is right,' holding that, while it is the duty of the individual Christian to give alms, or teach the poor, religion is primarily a spiritual conviction, disconnected with worldly conditions. Poverty, being a permanent condition, was accepted as part of the divine ordinance, and the poor 'ought,' therefore, to accept the position to which they were *born* as divinely ordained.¹

But in no long time the active work carried on by the Evangelicals among the miserable stimulated powerfully the philanthropic movement, which came increasingly to be staffed by men and women of that school, the most eminent of whom is the great Lord Shaftesbury, a staunch Evangelical, though neither of the Cambridge nor Clapham circle. Most of the best known men of the movement, next to Simeon, were laymen—Shaftesbury himself, Wilberforce, T. F. Buxton, Zachary Macaulay.

There was yet a third influence, neither religious nor charitable, but more potent among the lawyers, economists and politicians

¹ A perversion of the phrase in the Church Catechism which is still 'quoted.'

who were to direct political reform—the purely intellectual influence of Bentham and his disciples.

Jeremy Bentham was a legal philosopher whose power of thought and argument was acknowledged from the publication of his early *Fragment on Government* (1776) till his death in the reform year, 1832. He was no opponent of Adam Smith and the economists but, being a learned lawyer, he built up a more complete political philosophy upon the root idea of Liberty. His disciples maintained, *e.g.*, that to abstain from legislative interference in economic questions is right on the highest ground, that of the Absolute Liberty of every individual to do as he chooses, so long as he is not injuring the liberty of other individuals.

Bentham said that he had learned from Priestley, the scientific pioneer, the creed which he himself made famous—that *the duty of Government is to seek "the greatest good of the greatest number"*; and although he and his followers habitually disclaimed—and even opposed—any consideration of 'religion' in statesmanship, he insisted strongly upon the sense of *duty*: "Has a man talents? He owes them to his country in every way in which they can be serviceable." The sole right aim of legislation, he declared, was "*the carrying out of the principle of utility*," that is, promoting the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The Benthamite school was therefore termed *Utilitarian*.

If the English law were to be brought into conformity with this lofty standard it must be drastically reformed. Tremendous as this task must be, successive ministries and lawyers courageously grappled with it. Fortunately the very immensity of the problem placed it beyond party passions and individual follies, so that reforming law lords were at least spared factious opposition. The greatest difficulties arose from (*a*) the complication of the enactments piled up by successive centuries, so that every repeal or simplification must be embodied in a series of clauses, each to be voted on separately, and (*b*) the personal difficulties, when every alteration of practice meant new rules for a host of old officials, and every benefit to the public, interference with established privileges, customs or abuses.

The energy of Brougham, the Radical Lord Chancellor, made a vigorous beginning. He first cleared off all the arrears of the Court of Chancery, which under Eldon's excessively cautious reign had accumulated to an oppressive degree.

Next, his institution of the 'Central Criminal Court' provided a supreme court of judgment for London and any other place not locally possessed of a competent machinery of justice.

His creation of the 'Judicial Committee of the Privy Council' provided a small court of highly experienced law lords to wield that special royal supremacy in law exercised by the Crown from, at least, the time of Alfred, as a Court of Appeal.

To it appeals may be made from the principal courts of the

colonial dominions, and any special courts (such as Admiralty) set up in foreign places; also ecclesiastical cases, such as once went before the High Commission Court, and earlier still to the Pope. But the House of Lords still remained the supreme Court of Appeal for the regular law courts in the United Kingdom, its decisions being given, since 1844, only by the experienced law lords.

Brougham prepared, also, for the reformation in the bankruptcy laws so long desired, and succeeding Chancellors followed his lead, till Westbury finally abolished the cruel debt system, so familiar in the pages of Dickens. Henceforth any debtor really insolvent might, like tradesmen debtors, apply to a law court and be officially certified as a bankrupt, so as to be able to start life afresh.

If the new rules proved to be rather over-generous to the fraudulent, they swept away an incubus of hopeless and useless suffering from the families of the foolish or unfortunate.

The ideas of Bentham upon liberty, justice and government were developed by James Mill and his more famous son, John Stuart Mill, and were adopted and carried to some practical effect by many eminent statesmen.

The Utilitarians were at first strongly individualist, holding that not only was restraint upon individual action actually wrong, but that the voluntary efforts of individuals formed the best method of human progress.

They supposed that good reasoning would convert men and that their intellectual convictions would then be carried into fact. Bentham considerably overrated the integrity and intelligence of average human nature. Probably this devotion to voluntary effort may account for a number of *permissive* laws enacted by Parliament—as upon the employment of children in factories, or the scope of town councillors. But most of them had to be re-enacted in a compulsory form in order to remove the option of doing nothing. Even the establishment of *police*, which began under Peel in 1829, was not made a general rule until 1856, by which time the individualist frame of mind among the educated public was yielding to the opposite persuasion now known as '*collectivism*.'

(ii) *The First Social Movement*

The dominant influence of *laissez faire* came to be challenged at the close of the eighteenth century by the advocates of an opposite idea. When *laissez faire* had come to mean little more than unhampered competition, including the competition of the rich and powerful with the poor and defenceless, a 'self-help' which was no more than 'each for himself,' it was certain that reaction would set in, and individualism be replaced by a more co-operating temper.

This reaction was the effect of at least three distinct schools of thought, the Owenite or early '*socialist*,' the *Christian Socialist*, and the philosophical thinkers of about 1830–50, who may best be de-

scribed as *collectivist*. The first movement was anti-religious, the second religious, the third non-religious. The two latter, however, fall outside the limits of the present volume.

Robert Owen was, like Watt and Cobbett, a 'self-taught' and 'self-made' man. A Welsh peasant-boy trained in London workshops, he went to Manchester to seek his fortune and was one of numerous Lancashire operatives who by skilful experiment and hard work became employers. As a rule such masters were among the hardest to their employees, but Owen was a striking exception, he was always trying to raise and benefit his workmen, first in Manchester and then in Lanark. He invented a scheme for model factories which he carried into practice with much success. His root ideas were (1) that the character of men is formed by their surroundings, so that if good conditions were arranged by the employer the workers might be happy and greatly improved in character while their children might be made almost perfect; and (2) that not individual profit but the good of the whole community, or Society in general, is what individuals and Government alike ought to aim at. He termed himself, and with justice, a Socialist, one who seeks the social, or general, good.

Owen's model factory settlement at New Lanark (1799 till 1820) near Glasgow succeeded for many years and attracted much attention. His mills were surrounded by model cottages, gardens, bath-houses, schools, etc. Unfortunately he tired of attending only to his own business and attempted to propagate his system by converting great personages, in Germany, Austria, the United States and even Russia and Mexico, and finally set on foot a wild scheme for a large communist settlement in America which came ignominiously to grief (just in time to save Coleridge and Wordsworth from emigrating), and so he forfeited his early reputation and influence among thinking men.

Owen had a fanatic's confidence in his own judgment, and insisted that religion of every kind was the great enemy to human happiness. In consequence, 'Socialism' was understood to mean an attack on Christianity, and this rendered most Englishmen averse from Owen's propaganda. There occurred, therefore, a gap between the Socialism of Robert Owen, and that which, in the next generation, was taught by a school of English Churchmen who called themselves 'Christian Socialists,' maintaining that the spirit of Christianity lived not in individualism but in fellowship.

A more popular movement than the brief episode of Owen was, about the same time, making its early appearance in London. During the 'nineties the unselfish efforts of an original pioneer, Francis Place, appealed to the sturdy spirit of self-help to struggle towards a more decent livelihood for working men, by forming *Trade Clubs*. Place, by his own hard work and intelligence, raised himself from a tailor's apprentice to be a master tailor and large employer. He educated himself by

assiduous reading, and lavished his talent for organisation on forming *clubs* among, first, the journeymen tailors, then (by their request) among the workmen in other trades (1793–9). These clubs frequently came into touch with the political clubs which, during the French war, sought to stir up a popular political revolt in England.

The connection of the trade clubs with the political *corresponding* clubs ruined them. The Government and the general public saw in them a simple machinery of treason, and Pitt's Combination Acts and Sidmouth's and Castlereagh's Six Acts extinguished them. Place, however, remained undismayed and turned to political agitation in the House of Commons. From 1807 to 1832 he was one of the most influential men in England. While Cobbett was creating by his bold newspaper a public opinion among working men, this respectable, well-to-do tailor, seldom to be seen on a platform, known to a host of most reputable customers, was organising, in his library behind his shop at Charing Cross, the parliamentary radical movement. Burdett, Roebuck, or Joseph Hume spoke the speeches in the House or at Birmingham and other towns. Place gave them their information, and found funds and means for printing the pamphlet and placard ammunition against ministers. The repeal of the worst Combination Acts, in 1824, was largely due to his labours.

(iii) *Education*

Throughout the eighteenth century most of the great public schools and the town grammar schools had remained in a somewhat stagnant condition: if the masters and ushers taught the boys sufficient Latin, they had done all that was expected. Rich parents usually engaged special tutors to teach and look after their sons. There was a great deal of freedom—or licence—in all the fashionable schools; it was actually possible for two boys to fight together till the smaller was killed by the bigger. At school and at Oxford and Cambridge it was equally possible for boys to be educated by their tutors or their own reading to a very high degree, or to remain totally ignorant, or to acquire proficiency only in sport, or in dissipation.

At the close of the eighteenth century the higher education of Great Britain was centred at Edinburgh, where flourished Mathematics, Philosophy, and Medicine. From Scotland came the leading engineers, the economists and the most fashionable London physicians. The prizes of the Law were almost always secured by Scots—Lords Mansfield, Eldon, Stowell, Loughborough, Erskine and Brougham were Scotch in origin.

It became fashionable for ambitious youths to spend a year or two at 'the Athens of the North,' and to have lived under Professor Dugald Stewart's roof there was a certain pledge of distinction.

It was in Edinburgh that the foremost Whig and Reform magazine

originated—the *Edinburgh Review*. The inevitable Tory and London counter-blast was the *Quarterly Review*.

But during the last years of the great war and the most oppressive period of the Liverpool–Castlereagh Ministry (about 1812–22), a knot of intellectual youths at Oxford were training themselves by study of the great classical authors and the young English poets—Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Keats, Shelley and Byron. Among them were John Keble, Thomas Arnold and John Coleridge, all at Corpus Christi College.

Keble was destined to awaken the next great Church movement, Coleridge to make a forward movement in law; Arnold's Headmastership at Rugby (1827–42) made an educational era. He proclaimed the aim of school education to be the awakening of thought and formation of habits of industry, intelligence, courage and honour, and he was the pioneer in new methods directed to this aim, as well as of a new method of studying history as the life of the past.

Just at the beginning of the nineteenth century more organised efforts towards an elementary education for the poorer classes began to be made. They were originated by voluntary pioneers.

Joseph Lancaster in Southwark, and Andrew Bell in Madras, two enthusiastic teachers totally unconnected with each other, almost simultaneously devised a way of teaching reading and writing to large numbers of children by setting the elder, as 'monitors,' to teach to the younger what they had themselves just learned. Lancaster, though he was quite poor, opened a gratuitous school, teaching a thousand boys and training his 'monitors' to become future teachers. Bell was a chaplain on the East India Company's establishment and had charge of their Madras Orphan Asylum. Afterwards he organised a system of Church Schools on the same model at home.

Lancaster's work quickly become noticed and was supported and extended by men of rank and wealth. Bell published an account of his 'Madras system' which also attracted notice and imitation. Both pioneers eschewed corporal punishment (which was still the usual rule in the average school), but Lancaster devised all manner of unpleasant punishments instead.

Unhappily dissension was sown between these two excellent men on account of the difference in their attitude towards religious teaching. Lancaster (who at one time became a Quaker, though the Society of Friends afterwards rejected him) held strongly that education should be 'non-sectarian,' meaning without religious teaching or recognition of any system of worship.

Bell (being a clergyman of the Church) naturally taught his children on the usual Church system.

The notable Mrs. Trimmer, who was one of the earliest writers of prim little books for children, wrote a tract against Lancaster and his schools; George III had patronised him, but the King was

now imbecile and Queen Charlotte patronised Mrs. Trimmer. The *Edinburgh Review* defended Lancaster; the *Quarterly Review* defended Bell.

Finally, the friends of elementary education in connection with the Church founded the *National Society* (1811), 'for promoting the education of the Poor in the principles of the Established Church throughout England and Wales.' It established a great number of schools of the Bell type. The 'Lancasterian' schools flourished also, and much better when Lancaster ceased himself to control them.

The *British and Foreign School Society*, supported by the dissenting bodies, was founded to maintain schools of this type. Lord Brougham, the poet Wordsworth, and the Tory pamphleteer and man of letters Southey were among those who most strongly supported the National Schools.

Brougham and Southey alike believed that education alone could pave the way towards national reform, and it was largely in connection with these schools that Brougham encouraged the "Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge," for which a number of eminent men wrote books which formed a silent crusade against ignorance and folly all over the British Dominions.

Yet another and harder task was carried out for many years by voluntary charitable effort. *Ragged Schools* was the name generally bestowed on classes held by missionaries of education among the poverty-stricken children in London slums, much like Sunday Schools, but that they were held on Saturdays and in the evenings. The attendance of pupils and teachers was purely optional. They were staffed by earnest Christian workers, and Lord Shaftesbury was one of the strongest supporters. But an immense expenditure of effort seemed to show that even the lifelong endeavours of these missionaries could not sufficiently cope with the mounting tide of ignorance and vice.

FROM A REPORT OF PITT'S SPEECH ON THE LABOURERS' WAGES BILL,
FEBRUARY 12TH, 1796.

From Howard's *The Beauties of Pitt*, p. 113 ff.

. . . But the statement of Dr. Price was erroneous, as he compared the earnings of the labourer at the period when the comparison is instituted, with the price of provisions and the earnings of the labourer at the present day, with the price of the same articles, without adverting to the change of circumstances and to the difference of provisions. Corn, which was then almost the only food of the labourer, was now supplied by cheaper substitutions, and it was unfair to conclude that the wages of labour were so far from keeping pace with the price of provisions, because they could no longer purchase the same quantity of an article for which the labourer had no longer the same demand. The simple question now to be considered was, whether the remedy for the evil, which was admitted in a certain extent to exist, was to be obtained by giving to the justices the power to regulate the price of labour, and by endeavouring to establish by authority, what would be much better accomplished by the unassisted operation of principles? . . . Was

it not better for the House then to consider the operation of general principles, and rely upon the effects of their unconfined exercise? . . .

The poor-laws of this country, however wise in their original institution, had contributed to fetter the circulation of labour, and to substitute a system of abuses in room of the evils which they humanely meant to redress, and, by engrafting upon a defective plan defective remedies, produced nothing but confusion and disorder. The laws of settlements prevented the workman from going to that market where he could dispose of his industry to the greatest advantage, and the capitalist from employing the person who was qualified to procure him the best returns for his advances. These laws had at once increased the burdens of the poor, and taken from the collective resources of the State to supply wants which their operation had occasioned, and to alleviate a poverty which they tended to perpetuate. Such were the institutions which misguided benevolence had introduced; and, with such warnings to deter, it would be wise to distrust a similar mode of conduct, and to endeavour to discover remedies of a different nature. The country had not yet experienced the full benefit of the laws that had already been passed, to correct the errors which he had explained. . . .

The encouragement of friendly societies would contribute to alleviate that immense charge with which the public was loaded in the support of the poor, and provide by savings of industry for the comfort of distress. Now, the parish officer could not remove the workman merely because he apprehended he might be burdensome, but it was necessary that he should be actually chargeable. But from the pressure of a temporary distress might the industrious mechanic be transported from the place where his exertions could be useful to himself and his family, to a quarter where he would become a burden without the capacity of being even able to provide for himself. To remedy such a great striking grievance, the laws of settlement ought to undergo a radical amendment. He conceived, that to promote the free circulation of labour, to remove the obstacles by which industry is prohibited from availing itself of its resources, would go far to remedy the evils, and diminish the necessity of applying for relief to the poor's rates. In the course of a few years, this freedom from the vexatious restraint which the laws imposed would supersede the object of their institution. The advantages would be widely diffused, the wealth of the nation would be increased, the poor man rendered not only more comfortable but more virtuous, and the weight of poor's rates, with which the landed interest is loaded, greatly diminished.

XXX

NEW POLITICS

GEORGE IV

(A) "THE QUEEN'S TRIAL" AND THE RADICALS

WHEN the death of the imbecile George III caused the Regent's accession as George IV (January 1820) there seemed little reason to suppose the event of any political importance, yet it produced considerable results on account of an attempt to engineer the King's divorce from his queen-consort, Caroline of Brunswick.

The pathetic little tragedy of their only child, Princess Charlotte, had already closed with her death in 1817, a catastrophe which the populace in London ascribed, not only to an incompetent doctor but to the callous neglect of the royal family.

The vices of George IV and his brothers had long since made them so extremely unpopular as to raise doubts whether the monarchy could survive so much contempt. When it was known that he would begin his formal reign by a fresh attack on his persecuted wife a furious indignation prevailed which put social agitation for the time in the background.

George IV was probably too ill-read to think himself copying Henry VIII, but he had early discovered (like his ancestors Prince Frederick and George I) that domestic life was the sphere in which he could most easily tyrannise with the advantages on his own side. His vices and follies had always been notorious, nor should anyone have expected that he would turn out differently, considering the shockingly bad education which George III had inflicted on his sons. The traits in him which disgusted alike the most fashionable and the most humble sections of society were the falsehood which did not shrink from the meanest cheating and lying, and the venomous spite especially inflicted on his father, wife and child.

He had once, in youth, fallen in love with a beautiful and accomplished lady, the widowed Mrs. Fitzherbert, whom he met in fashionable Whig circles. He had induced her to consent to a secret marriage (1785), though the secret was soon an open one to many people. This would have been called in Germany a 'morganatic' marriage, perfectly moral and lawful in the view of religion and society, though not recognised legally as conveying any rank or inheritance, and no doubt it was so regarded by Mrs. Fitzherbert

and her personal admirers. In England, however, no such qualification of marriage was known, and the Prince's action, as he and everyone concerned very well knew, infringed two English laws—the Act of Settlement (1701) and the Royal Marriage Act (1772). The former had enacted that the heir to the throne must neither be a Papist nor marry a Papist: therefore, as Mrs. Fitzherbert belonged to the Roman Church he would forfeit the succession by marrying her. The Act of 1772, procured by George III to extend his power over his own family, had enacted that no member of the royal family should be able to marry legally without the sovereign's sanction, any private marriage being void. The Prince was clever enough to reckon on this later Act to invalidate the former, Mrs. Fitzherbert being the only person to suffer.

Two years later the debts of the Prince of Wales had become so crying a scandal that he and his friends, the King and Pitt all felt it necessary to provide an official establishment for him by parliamentary grant. Thereupon a question was put in the Commons respecting the rumour of his private marriage, and the Prince directed Fox to tell the House that the rumour was not true. The money was then voted, the Prince's mode of life continued as before, but—officially at all events—he was unmarried. When, however, he a second time applied for a large grant, Parliament refused to listen to the request unless he were about to contract a real marriage. To obtain the money he declared himself ready to marry any wife his father thought suitable, and George III promptly named his niece, Princess Caroline of Brunswick, daughter of the King's sister and that Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick who was a famous general in the Seven Years' War. The marriage took place in 1795. Unhappily Caroline was perhaps the most unsuitable bride the King could have found for his son. Scarcely grown-up, shockingly ignorant and ill-mannered, with no self-restraint or common-sense, though she could chatter volubly in bad and vulgar English, she could not behave properly, would not even play cards or do fancy-work. She indulged in childish amusements, dressed untidily, and allowed people to overhear her sarcasms on her husband and his mother, Queen Charlotte.

But she was warm-hearted, honest, and well-meaning, as simple in her tastes as she was childish in her pleasures, which might, for instance, take the form of dressing up in disguise and going to see the London sights among the crowd or to do some unsuitable kindness to a chance-met beggar, under the delusion that nobody could recognise her. The kind of popularity which she acquired among the London mob only made her the more disliked by the royal family and the aristocracy, and little surprise was felt when the Prince of Wales refused to live with her. He, in fact, turned her out of Carlton House, accompanied only by a few dutiful servants, to set up house for herself in no very dignified fashion.

The Prince desired to get an Act of divorce carried through Par-

liament, such as was frequently passed during the reign of George III for individual noblemen, as no law of divorce at that time had been devised.

For an Act of divorce evidence of misconduct had to be produced in the Houses. In 1806, when Fox came into office, and in 1815, when the Tories were triumphant, the Prince Regent had proffered some evidence which he thought would enable his ministers to carry an Act. But the 'evidence' was of the most trivial kind and manifestly obtained by malice or fraud, and there was too much sense of justice in both Houses to allow of such an Act being obtained.

The efforts of the Prince's spies and bullies frightened the Princess of Wales out of England as soon as the cessation of war made it possible to go abroad. 'The mad Princess' amused herself with aimless wanderings, till on the tidings of her husband's accession to the throne she hurried to England to take her lawful place as Queen. She was warned that no notice would be taken of her; the new King had forbidden her name to be mentioned in the Church Prayers, and the Prime Minister (Liverpool) was about to bring a '*Bill of pains and penalties*' against her into Parliament which would decree a separation.

The reason for the obsequious conduct of the Ministry was that George IV now possessed the power which George III had so industriously acquired, and that they could not retain office unless they gratified him. His hatred of his half-demented wife had become a mania; Liverpool and Castlereagh probably thought that there was little difference between the two, and, in any case, that the Bill was a necessary political move. Only Canning refused to consent, resigned office and quitted England.

The attempt, however, exhibited the Tory Cabinet in a peculiarly odious light, while the Opposition, though not numerous in Parliament, thought it saw its way to winning a popular support withheld for forty years.

The Whigs, the old aristocratic connection now led by Lords Grey and Grenville, accomplished an official alliance with the popular or *Radical* party, led by Brougham and Burdett, in hopes of winning a victory over the Tories: the active steps were all taken by the Radicals, Brougham making the 'Trial' of Queen Caroline his own 'platform.' Not the Whigs, but the Radicals secured the popular applause.

Outside Parliament different classes, at least in London and the southern counties, were united in a common indignation at the injustice which subjected a solitary woman, of foreign birth and habits, but with no home or surviving relatives, to what was virtually a public trial by the Houses of Parliament on charges brought at the command of a king and husband whose own record was notoriously infinitely worse than anything ascribed to his wife.

Popular sympathy pleased the unhappy Caroline and the astute

Brougham, but it could exert no influence inside Parliament, where ministers had made up their minds beforehand.

Lord Chancellor Eldon had for many years made a system of supporting the wishes of the sovereign, and Castlereagh, anxious to keep the personal goodwill of George IV (whose favourite, Lord Yarmouth, was his cousin), directed the resources of diplomacy to obtain accusations from Austrian subjects in Italy and to prevent the Queen's witnesses from reaching England. Steps of this kind he felt to be necessary because the *Bill* would not be voted by Parliament unless strong grounds were shown.

"The Queen's Trial," as the proceeding was usually called, acted like a kind of moral thunderstorm, revealing in its lurid light the interests and intentions of the actors.

The Bill was introduced in the House of Lords and there conducted like a trial. Brougham, the Queen's principal lawyer, enhanced his political reputation by his skilful examination of the witnesses, and by revealing the unfairness of the ministers he covered Castlereagh's name with a still deeper cloud of popular hatred.

The Lords finally passed the Bill only by so small a majority that the ministers dared not proceed with it in the Commons. They therefore announced that they *withdrew* the Bill, which the mob of London took to be a great triumph for Queen Caroline, but which really left her at the mercy of the Cabinet. For, as they themselves recorded, considering themselves very clever, "The Queen will in law be the Queen and uninjured by the Bill, and the Government will have the sanction of the House of Lords for her general misconduct"—and therefore be justified in refusing coronation or mention in the prayers—"and, moreover, they will keep their places," having done enough to fulfil literally their promises to the King, though without the success both he and they had expected. Unluckily for them everybody else could see their cleverness and despised it.

After this a sudden clearance of the political stage took place. The poor demented Queen died and George IV, scared by the outburst of popular hatred, left England on a progress to Ireland, Scotland and Hanover, and on his return retreated into private self-indulgence. In 1822 Castlereagh, who was ill, died by his own hand in a sudden fit of insanity, and Sidmouth at last retired. The men who replaced them were Pittites in principle, keen for reforms at home. Canning took the Foreign Office, Peel the Home Office, Huskisson administered the Board of Trade (which now became an important department) and inspired the working of the Exchequer.

Their projects were likely to be hampered on two sides, by the spite of George IV, who honoured Canning by his personal detestation, and by the jealousy of the Radicals, who beheld what they considered as *their* programme—of freer trade, legal and parliamentary reform, workmen's rights, peace and retrenchment—put

forward by a Ministry which called itself Tory, did not displace old officials, and was supported in the Houses by the regular phalanx of Liverpool's voters.

(B) ENGLAND AND EUROPE (1822-9)

George Canning had been universally regarded, for several years, as the inevitable rival of Castlereagh. In the opinion of many he was the most able statesman of the time, and ministers had dreaded his originality of mind and his advocacy of liberty. He had re-entered the Ministry as President of the Board of Control for India in 1816, but resigned when the Bill against the Queen was determined on, and thereby incurred the hate of George IV, who tried to exclude him from office ever after. His greatest fame was won in the sphere of foreign policy, but his genius was felt, like Lord Chatham's in earlier days, throughout the whole Ministry.

It was Canning's great achievement in foreign policy to recognise, and to make others recognise, the altered relations of this country with other countries which had come about since Waterloo.

Castlereagh had already perceived the alteration before his death in 1822, but he had left Great Britain still a member of the Quadruple Alliance and pledged to carry out the Second Peace of Paris and the Vienna Treaties (of 1815). He had declined to join the 'Holy Alliance' of the three despots, but he was universally believed, by both Englishmen and foreigners, to be in sympathy with the despots, as his action at home and his diplomatic conduct certainly seemed to prove. "He was my other self," said Metternich.

It had been from the first evident to the peoples of Europe that the three autocrats of Russia, Austria and Prussia were allied for the purpose of suppressing all popular movements in all countries; they had, in fact, plainly announced their intention of maintaining what they termed 'Legitimate' sovereigns (those whose title was that of 'divine right,' meaning descent), and their conferences at Aix-la-Chapelle, at Troppau and at Verona (1818, 1820, 1821-2) had been followed by military punishment of literary and constitutional liberal propaganda in Germany and Italy.

Their subjects, however, did not accept the part of 'children' assigned to them by the Holy Allies. There were incessant revolts with the object of obtaining some kind of Constitution, particularly in Piedmont, Naples and Spain. The Belgians proved unmanageable by the Dutch. The Greeks broke into revolt against the Turks, and the other Christian peoples of the Balkan peninsula did the same. The populations of South and Central America which represented colonies of Spain or Portugal now repudiated the authority of their mother countries, and began to erect native republican Governments. If all these revolts, most of them national movements against foreign and despotic rulers, were to be put down by the 'Holy Alliance,' Europe would simply have exchanged

Napoleon for the Russian or Austrian Emperor : and the Italian movements were, in fact, put down by Austrian troops, while as for Spain, as Great Britain would not interfere, the three autocrats intimated to the French sovereign that they were ready to entrust it to him.

By 1822 Castlereagh had begun to explain to the three dynasts that Great Britain could not join them in dictating to other States. At the Congress of Verona the British Envoy, the Duke of Wellington, by Canning's desire went rather further and definitely expressed disapproval of the *mandate* given to Louis XVIII to march troops into Spain and compel the Spaniards to submit to their miserable King—who had actually sworn to observe the Constitution which he now withdrew.

It was the English principle henceforth that the relations of nation with nation were properly the concern of all the Allies, but that the condition and government of each single nation within itself was the sole concern of that nation.

French armies did indeed execute the mandate of the three sovereigns and force the Spaniards to submit to their tyrannical King, whose cruel revenge disgusted the French officers. It was scarcely the business of England to interfere, but for the moment it looked as if her influence no longer counted. When, however, Franco-Spanish troops were ordered into Portugal, to take sides in the internal dissensions of that kingdom, Canning responded to the Portuguese appeal for assistance by an immediate despatch of troops, carried into the Tagus on an English fleet. This action was sufficient and the Franco-Spanish armies were recalled.

But the three members of the *Holy Alliance* were still desirous of compelling both the Spanish and the Portuguese dominions in South America to continue obedient to their mother countries, while those colonies themselves (the Spanish—Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Chili, Bolivia ; the Portuguese—Brazil) were determined to establish their own independence as Republics.

The versatile Tsar Alexander now found himself in a difficulty as to the policy of the Holy Alliance. Republics were in themselves the worst foes of autocracy and ought to be forbidden in South America, but if he was to protect despotism universally he would have to forbid the Greeks, Serbians and Wallachians (Roumanians) ¹ to rebel against the Sultan ; yet without their help he could never annex Constantinople. He decided to attend to the world in general before redistributing the Balkan States, and, for the benefit of the King of Spain, sent his fleet (on the way to South America) into the Mediterranean, where he incidentally required, as necessary naval bases, Minorca and some Ionian islands ; he intended, he said, to assist the King of Spain and to abolish the pirate-state of Algiers.

Before he was quite ready, however, the Government of Great

¹ Modern *Roumania* represents the old Wallachia, Moldavia and Bessarabia.

Britain had snatched away the Russian opportunity. Canning formally recognised the countries of South America as independent States (1823) by appointing British consuls in their capital cities, and therefore prevented Russia from treating them as mere rebels without a quarrel with Great Britain.

And he acted in much the same way by the Greeks: he treated them not as *rebels*, but as *belligerents*, the difference being that they had a right to buy arms, make compacts, and to lay down rules for their own ports and coasts, and were also entitled to the customary usages of civilised war and the neutrality of other States. No public assistance was given by us to the Greeks, but the voluntary help of many English gentlemen, the most famous being the poet Byron, was not discouraged. On the death of Lord Liverpool, Canning became Prime Minister and tried to end the ferocious Turco-Greek conflict by an agreement among the three Powers most concerned, England, France and Russia (Treaty of London, 1827). They invited both Turks and Greeks to cease massacre and torture while a treaty was negotiated. The Greeks, the weaker side, accepted, the Turks did not, but the English Mediterranean fleet, joined by several French vessels, was ordered to watch the Greek coasts and an armistice was proclaimed. When the Turkish fleet arrived, bringing Turkish and Egyptian troops to execute a massacre in the Morea, Admiral Codrington intervened with a threat to fire unless the armistice was observed. The Turks were defiant, the threat was fulfilled, and the Turkish navy was sent to the bottom of Navarino Bay (October 1827).¹

Canning had died before this famous incident, but the subsequent acknowledgment of the Independence of Greece (1829) was recognised to be mainly due to him.

¹ The story that Codrington received from the Admiralty a severe rebuke with a postscript in the handwriting of the Duke of Clarence (William IV)—“Go it, Ned!” is, alas, fictitious.

XXXI

TORY REFORMS

(A) PEEL'S DOMESTIC AND IRISH POLICY—"CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION."

ROBERT PEEL began his career very young. He was the first statesman since the elder Pitt to spring from the class of commercial magnates, being the son of a very wealthy calico printer belonging to a family of Lancashire yeomen. He was educated for a political career and obtained at Oxford a reputation for remarkable talents. His father then purchased for him an Irish seat for Parliament and intimated to Lord Liverpool that unless his son was at once given office he should join the Whigs. The Prime Minister obeyed as promptly as if young Peel had been a duke's son and sent him to acquire the elements of politics as Irish Secretary (Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1812-18). It was natural that he should support the Tory Government; his father was a Tory, an enthusiastic supporter of Pitt, and had been made a baronet by Liverpool, and the son never had a doubt as to the name of the party he was at first to support, afterwards to control, and finally, as it turned out, to break up.

His duty in Ireland was to carry out the Government's policy, which policy was, in short, to keep order and to deal in some way with the thorny problem bequeathed by Pitt as to the relief of the Roman-catholics from their remaining disabilities.

With regard to the first point, Peel succeeded by his creation of a new kind of a civilian constabulary, non-party and non-military, but disciplined and permanent—the Dublin police force. The mob extremely resented this measure, which made riot, robbery and arson a sport too dangerous, and used to hoot the young secretary as 'Orange Peel,' but all other classes found so much practical advantage from its establishment that the nicknames given to the policemen of 'Bobby' and 'Peeler' conveyed no animosity.

With regard to the political question of enfranchisement for Roman-catholics, the Government in London was merely marking time; Peel therefore had to discourage agitation in favour of 'Relief,' and himself acquired a suspicion that the movement was an anti-English one. There were two sets of societies and agitators, the native and Roman-catholic aiming at obtaining the franchise,

and the rival Orange associations, which were Protestant, and chiefly, but not solely, in Ulster. Both sets exulted in violence and existed chiefly to retaliate on each other. The halting attitude of Government was disastrous to Ireland, but Liverpool had only been able to keep his Cabinet together by eschewing a clear decision, leaving the topic from 1812 "an open question," each minister being at liberty to speak and vote upon it as he thought fit, and no action being taken to alter the existing state of affairs, so that the decision was automatically negative. Canning had always urged the execution of Pitt's half-promise of complete enfranchisement, but Peel was for long steadily against it, believing that the only way of securing order in Ireland was to leave authority in the hands of an interest resembling the English governing class. There were plenty of other reforms crying for attention in England, especially in the sphere of commerce, and to these Peel devoted himself as soon as he held more responsible office, as Home Secretary, in the reconstructed Ministry of 1822. He then set aside the obsolete Navigation Acts (1661-2) by his *Reciprocity of Duties Act*, which enabled the Government to make friendly agreements with other countries for mutual trade. Many commercial duties were lowered and several hampering taxes repealed, particularly those which pressed upon the poor.

The laws which restricted the free travelling of workmen, as well as the Combination Act, were repealed (1824), except for penalties if a combination intimidated an employer. This new liberty instantly resulted in numbers of Trade Unions being formed and strikes being declared by many of them, so that a fresh Act reimposed some limits to the liberty to strike (1825).

Financial conditions, which had for years affected the country calamitously, began to improve in 1821 owing to the Act to enable the Bank of England to resume payment in coin (passed in 1819 and due chiefly to Peel). Other measures in 1825-6 further cut down the over-issue of paper money and permitted the erection of *joint-stock* banks, distinct from private partnerships on the one hand and the Bank of England on the other. These and similar financial measures encouraged a larger use of credit and were proved to be wise by the fact that the notes of the Bank of England became again exchangeable for their nominal value, which had not been the case for many years, a £5 note fetching only about £4 6s. 6d.

Of at least equal importance were Peel's humane reforms in the laws. For many years Romilly and Mackintosh had vainly besought Parliament to revise the enormous list of capital punishments, more than 200 offences being then punishable by death. Romilly (died 1818) could only get the death penalty revoked for thefts not over 5s. Peel now abolished it for 100 offences. His confidence was in the end justified by a decrease in crime and by the greater efficiency of police and juries when they no longer

had to choose between inflicting the death penalty and letting off the offender altogether.

But the years while these reforming laws were being carried through Parliament were by no means tranquil; social agitation was incessant and the Tory ministers proved their courage by steadily carrying on reforms amid riots and financial panic. The crowning achievements were (a) the erection of a better *sliding scale* for the corn duties, so as to import corn at a rather lower price, and (b) a commission to plan improvements in the cumbrous Chancery system, where the aged and despotic Eldon still utilised the forms of the past to choke justice in the present.

(B) CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION

Canning's premature death, like Pitt's, broke up the Cabinet, for upon the burning questions still awaiting settlement it was not unanimous. These were "the Catholic claims," Parliamentary Reform, reform of the law and a suggested national education scheme, to mention only the most pressing and contentious problems.

After two months' interval with Robinson (Lord Goderich, afterwards Earl of Ripon) as nominal chief, the Duke of Wellington became Prime Minister (1828) with Robert Peel as a reforming Home Secretary and leader in the House of Commons, and Lord Lyndhurst as an unreforming Lord Chancellor presiding in the Upper House.

Wellington was from 1814 universally regarded as the foremost Englishman. His fame, in truth, was the protection of the country and the mainstay of every Government which he supported; the security pledged by his very name had actually permitted the decrease of the army to such a vanishing point that its numbers (he said) were insufficient to carry out correctly a military funeral for the Commander-in-chief, the Duke of York. Wellington's influence held the Bourbons on the restored throne in France; to him alone would the Russian Tsar listen; only he could constrain the Prince Regent to behave decently, yet as a Prime Minister he was unsuccessful.

The Iron Duke's principle of life and conduct was always one and the same, the soldier's ideal. He required, as he rendered, integrity, efficiency, courage and obedience, while he set very little value on oratory or popular opinion. When the sovereign invited him to form a Government, he obeyed the command, as he regarded it, but he treated his colleagues in the Cabinet like regimental officers. For instance, knowing Huskisson to be a financial and commercial expert, he left him a free hand in his commercial and colonial departments, but when the financier refused to be bound on a political question by the majority of the Cabinet, but voted against them, the Duke considered him as a traitor in face of the enemy. Either in a pet, or by way of apology, Huskisson

wrote a formal offer of resignation, expecting a remonstrance and forgiveness. But the Duke took him at his word, appointed his successor and refused to allow him to retract.

Now the point on which Huskisson had chosen to vote as he chose was, whether the two members forfeited by a corrupt borough (East Retford) should be transferred to a large town. As the Duke and Peel decided on a negative (which implied a negative to any step of parliamentary reform), several other ministers who advocated such a reform resigned, including Palmerston and Lamb. They were the progressive, or liberal-minded, men, so that the Ministry appeared as once more Tory after the pattern of Perceval and Castlereagh, not of Pitt or Canning.

The next consequence was, that the filling of these vacated offices, by incidentally causing a bye-election in an Irish county, produced a sudden crisis over the Roman-catholic claims which had to be definitely settled at once, with the amazing result that the Duke and Peel themselves carried the Roman-catholic Relief Act in 1829.

This Relief, or 'Emancipation,' was from political disabilities, and was complicated by the fact that the position was different in Great Britain and Ireland, being in the latter bound up with race antipathies and with political problems.

Roman-catholics were unable to sit in either House of Parliament because the oath of allegiance which members must take had long ago intentionally been framed in terms which no Roman-catholic could use. They were also excluded from a number of distinguished offices by the Bill of Rights. On the other hand, with regard to the franchise for electing members of the House of Commons, Ireland was more favoured than England. In Ireland the franchise could be exercised by every forty-shilling freeholder, whatever his religion; in England only by ten-pound freeholders and not by Roman-catholics. But their former legal and social disabilities had been already removed both in Great Britain (1778, 1780, 1791) and in Ireland (1792-3).

The question of admitting them to Parliament was not purely one of tolerancce. It meant a departure from one of the main principles of the Revolution of 1688 and the Acts of Settlement, when the government of England and Scotland had been deliberately brought into accord with the national Churches and pledged against recognition of the Roman Church system. The reasons were writ large in comparatively modern history and numbers of intelligent persons, responsible partakers in the tasks of government, held that to reopen a question so definitely settled was, at best, a rash experiment and one which respect for the Constitution and the Church forbade. They thought it likely, too, that the uneducated classes might be stirred to riots by such a change and they did not consider that the political grievancess of an Irish peasant population deserved to be soothed at the cost of danger to the English people and Constitution.

The difficulties were enhanced by the Union of Great Britain and Ireland. For though there might be little likelihood that English, and still less Scottish, constituencies would send to Parliament any large number of Roman-catholic members, Ireland certainly would, and then the Irish members would be always opposed to their British colleagues on all questions involving religion and education. Moreover, English and Scottish interests, as well as foreign policy, would be voted upon by members influenced by the teaching of their clergy and owing their ultimate allegiance to a foreign potentate. But the strongest objection of the opponents was one seldom mentioned, from prudence or courtesy, but gravely felt: centuries of history, not only in this country but in nearly all European countries, made it certain that a strong influence, through religious means, could and very probably would be brought to bear on both voters and members which would tend to make of them a political party directed, on particular points, by what was essentially an alien authority habitually biassed against Great Britain.

Many might also consider that the fact that the clergy of the Church of England now habitually kept aloof from political controversies would place the national Church at a disadvantage before the highly organised system of that of Rome. Other politicians who were impervious to this consideration were susceptible to the sentiments of the Nonconformists, to whom concessions to the Roman Church were peculiarly unwelcome.

In short, the puzzle in which the whole question was involved is illustrated by the extraordinary plan adopted of leaving the ministers of successive Cabinets free to express their individual opinions whenever the topic was broached in Parliament.

The movement which now forced a decision on an unwilling Government had been organised far from the parliamentary benches by the Irish patriot and prince of agitators, Daniel O'Connell. An able lawyer and powerful orator, O'Connell had steadily protested against the Union, but with equal determination had discouraged the mingling of religious with political propaganda or an appeal to force. For twenty years he clung to the hope that Pitt's half-given pledge of enfranchisement would be redeemed and that constitutional methods might prevail.

For twenty years he helped to draw up petitions to Parliament, and to suggest enfranchising Bills; he patiently worked to remove such obstacles as English suspicions of rebellion, or jealousies among organisers in Dublin; but he stoutly refused all compromise on the one point which alone would have conciliated the Crown and the English Chancery. Canning and Grattan had suggested that a 'security' for the constitutional supremacy of the Crown in Ireland must be found, and that it might lie in a recognition of the royal power of veto on the appointment of bishops—that is, that George III should exercise the right of sanction which the Papacy had for ages refused to continental monarchs.

Many of the Irish nobility and hierarchy professed to be ready to accept this 'veto'; whether or not it would be permitted by the papal authority was carefully not inquired, but the parish clergy and their flocks, and O'Connell himself, honestly refused to contemplate any such bargain. The independence of their religion, they said, would be gone. This frankness strengthened the British opposition, while the disagreement among the Irish seemed to suggest that the various Bills which both sections presented to Parliament with such great zeal were of very uncertain value in any case. The most important were Plunket's Bills of 1820, which passed the Commons only to be rejected by the Lords, to the positive satisfaction of O'Connell.

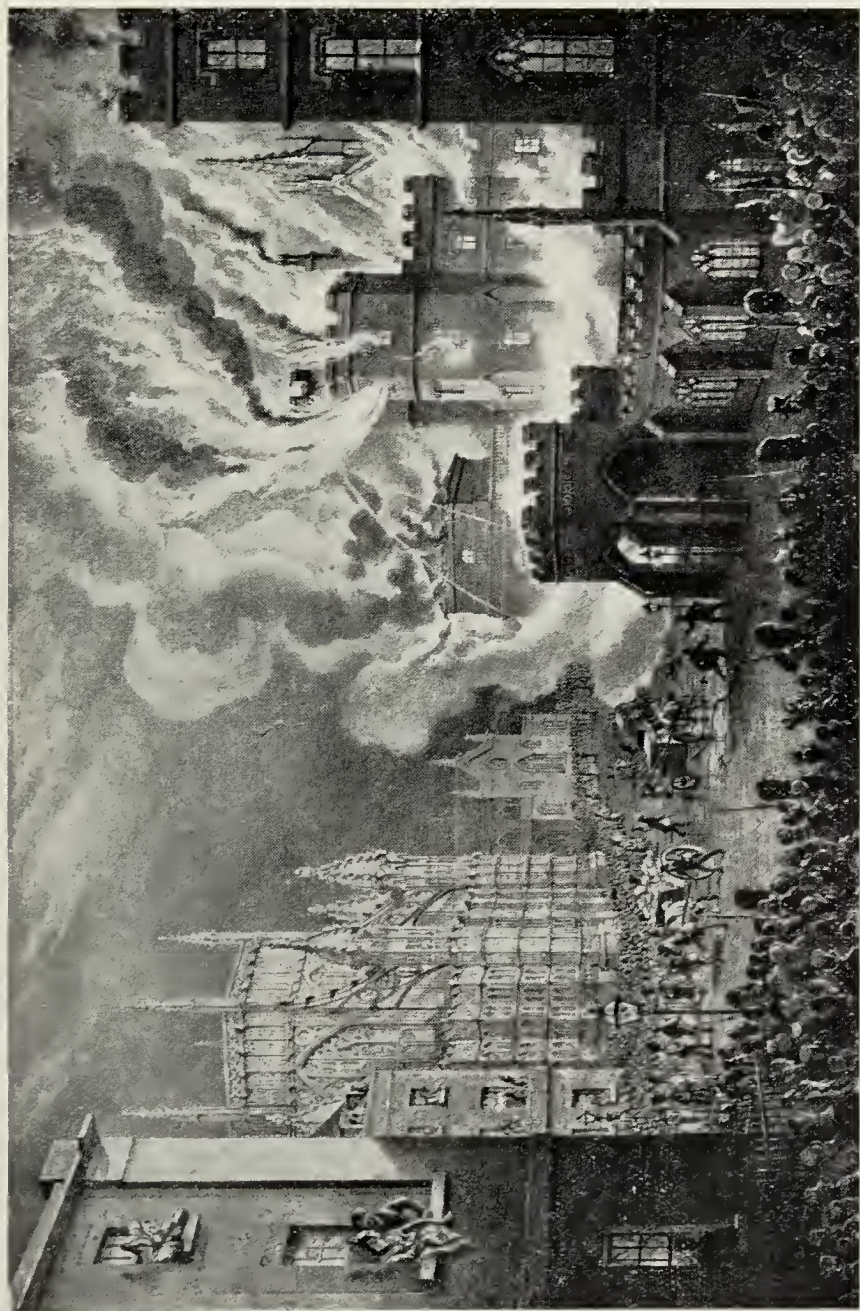
With the change of ministers and of political temper in 1822 O'Connell hoped for a better Act, and on seeing the subject consigned again to stagnation he put into action a wonderful Irish protest—"The Catholic Association" (or Committee, or Board, or League).

This was a voluntary society to support their Church and to assist each other among all Irishmen who would subscribe even a penny a month. "The Catholic Rent," the populace called it, and the enthusiasm with which the poor joined and their steady continuance showed that at last a bond of unity had been found for the majority of that disunited population.

When the Government proceeded to deal with the 'League' as it habitually did with English political societies, by orders of suppression, O'Connell's legal wit promptly changed the title and offices of the Association, which then proceeded just as before. Two Acts went through Parliament only to be evaded in this simple but effective manner.

Finally, the bye-election in Clare county in 1828 gave the opportunity for a daring challenge; no *law* had forbidden a Roman-catholic to be *elected*, and when the famous orator himself appeared as candidate the forty-shilling freeholders, those supposed men of straw, threw over their landlords' orders and the quite popular local candidate whom they were expected to elect, and returned Daniel O'Connell, who betook himself to London and presented himself to take his seat.

O'Connell was now challenging Parliament. The electors of Clare had simply used their legal right as a real right. They had shown that they could disregard the landlords who had for so long used a real, but not legal, power to control their votes. O'Connell's extremely violent language was a virtual challenge to a trial for libel which the Government were unwilling to risk; his support by the whole of the priests witnessed to the reality of their influence, his appearance in the House was intended to test the limit to which he could go: the oath was tendered to him, as it was to every new member; he refused to take it and was directed to withdraw. Thus the House was exhibited as



DESTRUCTION OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND HOUSE OF COMMONS BY FIRE, 1834.

CONTEMPORARY PICTURE BY WILLIAM HEATH.

facing p. 306.

excluding a member solely on the ground of his religious scruples, and those members who had from time to time advocated 'Relief' now found forced upon them the choice of either publicly deserting their principle or acting up to it. The seat was declared to be vacant and a fresh election ordered. Clare county re-elected O'Connell. Again the solemn farce was gone through in the House, the seat declared vacant, and a new writ issued. A third time Clare county elected O'Connell.

In Ireland excitement was intense; the 'Catholic Rent' was triumphantly gathered; no kind of violence as yet had occurred, but the Lord Lieutenant, the Marquis Wellesley, sent word to his brother that civil war would certainly begin as soon as the people should learn that their champion was finally defeated in Parliament.

The great general (like Monck) held civil war to be the most awful disaster that could befall a country and the worst failure of a statesman. He acted in this political crisis as he might have done had he in war been out-manceuvred by overwhelming numbers, that is, he evacuated his position and conducted a retreat. The position of No-Relief was relinquished and the Prime Minister himself introduced into the House of Lords a Bill that opened to Roman-catholics the political franchise and nearly all offices save those of Lord Chancellor and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Whatever the dangers involved in the grant of the franchise, they were less disastrous, the Duke believed, to both England and Ireland than the horrors of a civil war in Ireland which England would have to put down.

Peel agreed with the Duke. He had long realised how little Pitt's *Act of Union* had fulfilled the hopes of its author and he was willing to try the effect of this great concession. He carried the Bill through the Commons. Nobody but the Duke of Wellington could have brought the Lords and George IV to consent to the change. The latter had announced that on this question he was, like his father, conscientiously resolved never to yield. Everyone knew of this fanatical obsession of George III; nobody believed that his son had ever possessed a conscience; but the House of Lords contained many peers who were amenable to royal wishes, and when it transpired that the Duke had brought the King to withdraw his veto, their deference to Wellington's authority led them to pass the Bill (1829).

But it was deeply unfortunate that the dread of civil war was plainly stated to be the cause of this concession by England to Ireland, for the Irish supposed that the Duke and the English were afraid, not *for* them, but *of* them.

O'Connell went for a final election to Ireland and spread it through the country that his next aim was to have the Union repealed. He was the 'uncrowned king of Ireland,' parliamentary members were elected on his orders, the 'Catholic Rent' was still

subscribed, to provide a fund for agitation; but, on the other hand, the hateful tithes were still being collected, famine was still ever present, and O'Connell's violent speeches against ministers suggested how much likelihood there was of the fulfilment of Peel's hope that 'emancipation' would produce peace in Ireland.

In fact 'emancipation' bestowed very little on the Irish that they had not got already. English Romanists received votes and Parliament was opened to them all by the alteration in the oath of allegiance. But the Act was certainly an Irish victory, won by O'Connell.

XXXII

THE WHIG REFORM OF PARLIAMENT

IN the question of Reform of Parliament both the middle classes and the labouring classes felt keen interest, and were arrayed together as supporters of the Radicals and the reforming Whigs against the Tories.

Reform, therefore, had really become a national question on which everyone must take one or other side when, in 1830, events in France and Belgium kindled an excitement in this country which drove the Whig leaders to action.

Those events were a revolution in Paris and the revolt of Belgium from its Dutch King. The French sovereign, Charles X, had exasperated his subjects by excessively autocratic measures. Paris revolted, expelled the King and his family, and by almost unanimous consent and almost bloodless action placed on the throne the representative of the House of Orleans, Louis-Philippe, pledging him to a constitutional form of government.

In Belgium, which from 1789 had always been closely affected by Parisian events, a similar unanimous movement expelled the Dutch officials of the King of Holland and declared Belgium an independent State.

In both countries the 'Liberal' (or constitutional) revolution was carried out by the middle classes. The English middle classes were at least as intelligent and wealthy as those of France and Belgium, and their determination to share in the power and responsibility of government became suddenly ardent.

Now Wellington and Peel were not, in 1830, expecting to be faced by any fresh crisis, but supposed that the 'Relief' granted by them to the Roman-catholics was a sufficient concession to modern ideas. Peel was continuing his excellent legal reforms and had already organised in London the famous Metropolitan Police Force, when the death of George IV and the accession of William IV necessitated a General Election for a new Parliament which was universally expected to undertake the task of reforming Parliament. It was thought quite possible that Peel would undertake this task, in conjunction with the Whigs, both parties conceding a more popular Constitution in order to avoid violence and rebellion.

The first speech, however, made by the Duke of Wellington in the new Parliament informed the House of Lords that the system

of government in Great Britain was as near perfection as human thought could make it and that he would resist any attempt to alter it. When he sat down he perceived a stir of unusual excitement: "What's the matter?" he asked a friend. "What have I said?" "You have only announced the fall of your Government," was the curt reply. The Ministry were instantly made to feel their unpopularity in London and were defeated in the House of Commons on a financial motion. They then resigned. The question Wellington meant to ignore became, of course, the grand opportunity of the Opposition.

The Whig party was at this juncture very skilfully led by Earl Grey, more skilfully than his somewhat inert career of the past forty years seemed to promise. On the resignation of Wellington and Peel he accepted the royal command to form a Ministry, and with the full assent of William IV proceeded to compile a Reform Bill to change the construction of the House of Commons.

Charles Grey, of Howick in Northumberland, was the very model of the proverbial Whig. His inflexible principles and integrity, no less than his aristocratic lineage and manners, and his ample wealth, commanded the respect of all parties and persons. His politics were based upon abstract principles and for over forty years he was 'consistent.' As a young man he had supported Charles Fox, and though he occasionally differed from Fox in practical points, Grey never relaxed in his opposition to Pitt and Addington, though his father adhered to the latter and duly reaped a peerage. In 1807 Charles succeeded to the title and was obliged to sit in the House of Lords.

Grey had opposed the war with France and all the special Acts which maintained ministerial authority at home. He had several times advocated some measure of parliamentary reform, directed towards the diminution of Crown influence over elections in certain of the 'rotten' boroughs, but necessarily in vain so long as a permanent Tory Ministry controlled that influence. His weakness as a political leader was due to his delightful home-life. A state of feudal and patriarchal dignity in the cultured luxury of Howick was infinitely more pleasant than the drudgery of political debate in a permanent minority. In consequence he attended London and Parliament as seldom as possible and never acquired the popular confidence.

If Earl Grey was the acknowledged chief of the Whigs, the best reforming leader in the Commons was the Radical Brougham. Brougham's popular parts and extraordinary industry, his skill in advocacy, wide general knowledge, and powers of hard work had already won political success.¹ He had attacked very forcibly the Orders in Council, the State trials for 'libel,' the Slave Trade, the 'Holy Alliance,' and the income tax, and was of even more

¹ "If he had only known a little law he would have known something of everything."

service to his party and the cause of Reform by the ability and rapidity with which he wrote. Pamphlets and articles streamed from his pen, particularly in the then new and fashionable *Edinburgh Review*, which was the organ of Scottish philosophy and of the 'Liberalism' of the English Whigs. He made himself the spokesman of the Lancashire merchants, of the depressed agricultural interest, and of poor Queen Caroline, and so accumulated fame and popularity in very different circles.

The other important members of Grey's Ministry were the Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston (an Irish peer with a seat in the Commons and afterwards Prime Minister), Lord Althorp, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons (heir of Earl Spencer), Lord Melbourne (Lamb), Home Secretary and afterwards Prime Minister, and Lord Durham, Grey's son-in-law, politically a Radical, a man of genius but headstrong and difficult to work with.

There were wide differences of opinion upon the actual reforms to be inflicted upon the House of Commons, chiefly arising from two very different views of the nature of Parliament. Grey, like Burke and the original Whigs of 1689, thought that Parliament was meant to represent the combined wisdom of the nation. Cobbett, Burdett, Brougham and the other Radicals thought it was meant to represent the various interests of the nation. Burke had maintained, during the American War, that it did not matter how constituencies were arranged, if Cornwall possessed more boroughs than the northern half of England, or Yorkshire returned no more members than Rutland. These peculiarities had come about by course of time and history and were therefore sacred, and for the American colonists to say that they were 'not represented' was as ridiculous as if Birmingham and Manchester were to say they were 'not represented.' Now this, in 1830, was precisely what Manchester and Birmingham were saying, and that Grey could listen to them marks his advance upon Burke.

If, however, Grey and the Whigs wished to get rid of Crown and ministerial influence in elections they would have to reform the representation of Scotland and Ireland as well. Ever since the Union with the former in 1707, Scotch members, not to mention Scotch peers, had been merely a solid block of votes for ministers: ever since the Union with Ireland in 1801 Irish members were increasingly becoming the same, because of the large number of extremely poor voters, whose votes were simply for sale. Moreover, the large proportion of members granted to Ireland gave a much larger share of power to the illiterate and poverty-stricken Irish voters than to the better-educated English.

The Radicals, however, did not limit their animosity to Crown influence, they wanted to abolish the electoral influence of all patrons, whether of the Crown or the nobility, Whig or Tory. They therefore asked for triennial, or even annual, Parliaments

and for secret voting, on the 'ballot' plan already introduced upon the Continent, a device which nearly all the aristocracy and gentry regarded as the door not only to fraudulent voting, but to revolt and assassination too, so convinced were they, Whigs and Tories alike, that only the "natural influence of the born leaders" would keep the United Kingdom out of anarchy.

The Radicals and Whigs differed again in their view of the member's position. Grey saw the member as a 'representative,' elected because he possessed the confidence of the electors, to join in the national deliberations according to his best judgment. The followers of Cobbett saw the member as their 'delegate,' sent to record votes as instructed by the electors. Again, the Whigs wished only for intelligent electors, the Radicals wanted every householder to have a vote.

It was Grey's great achievement that he put aside detailed considerations and, on the whole, the interests of the class to which he belonged, and made the *Reform Bill* a sweeping revolution in parliamentary history.

It is true that he believed that the great Whig families would still continue to direct government. From gratitude or from natural deference, he thought, the middle classes would be sure to follow "their natural leaders." He was also able to believe that there existed an "ancient alliance of the Whigs and the people," and that gratitude for the Reform would ensure Whig majorities for a long time.

The strength of the reformers lay in the nation outside the Houses of Parliament; the strength of the Opposition was inside the Houses. But Reform could be accomplished only by a law carried through Lords and Commons. When Grey's Government was defeated on the question he brought in a fresh Bill; in all, three Bills were produced, differing slightly from each other, the third being at last passed by the aid of William IV.

So long as George IV was on the throne there had been no chance of carrying a great constitutional alteration against both the Lords and the Crown. But William IV, though never either clever or a politician, had mounted the throne with a strong conviction of duty, and a great anxiety to be 'constitutional.' This he understood to mean, supporting the Prime Minister so long as the nation did so. But he believed that he ought to be impartial, and above all, that any violence would produce a Jacobin rising in London. The Bill was introduced in the House of Commons (1831) by Lord John Russell, younger son of the Duke of Bedford, and therefore entitled by descent to fill a prominent place in a constitutional struggle. No one but the King himself knew the proposals of the ministers and the excitement was intense as Russell expounded them.

Most of the nomination boroughs and a number of others with less than 2000 inhabitants were to be disfranchised and forty-

seven other small boroughs were to return only one member each. In their stead a number of large towns were to return members.

The franchise in the boroughs was to be made alike, such mediaeval relics as 'pot-wallopers' (which let in poor persons, everyone who "boiled his own pot") being abolished, while on the other hand, all £10 householders paying rates were admitted to vote, even if not freeholders. Only a few of the 'pocket' boroughs were retained, because they often provided seats for clever young men: but they all belonged to Whigs.

The county franchise, also, was no longer to be restricted to freeholders, but extended to copyholders¹ of as much as £10 a year and leaseholders of £50 or over, *i.e.* to a number of farmers.

At the long list of discarded boroughs the amazement of the hearers became intense: Reformers doubted if they were not dreaming, Tories muttered "they are mad." Nothing so extravagant, they agreed, could possibly pass the House.

The critical second reading was voted on by the fullest House on record and was carried by a majority of one (302 to 301).

So close a division prepared all minds for a defeat, which duly overtook the Government on a special motion.

Grey then asked the King to dissolve Parliament, hoping that the public support of the Bill at the elections would convince the Tories that they must give way. But the Tories maintained that to dissolve a Parliament which had not yet sat three months for the sake of one Bill was scarcely constitutional, and as they had a large majority in the Lords and half of the Commons, they thought the Whig ministers ought to resign and tried to compel them to do so by refusing to pass the annual grants of revenue.

Grey thought it important to dissolve before the Lords could vote an Address to the sovereign against a dissolution, and William IV promptly agreed to announce it himself, to save time.

Many of the officials about the King were Tories and tried to put off the decision by saying that the royal coach and cavalcade could not be got ready so suddenly. But the old King only retorted that he would go with anybody's horses, or in a hackney-coach: an outburst which quickly flew out of doors, so that the streets were full of cheering crowds. Not for many long years, hardly since Good Queen Anne, had a sovereign been so acclaimed.

The new Metropolitan Police (established by Peel in 1829) and the Whig Home Secretary, Lord Melbourne, expected riots and were greatly relieved that the breaking of windows satisfied the mob. The Lord Mayor had given leave to illuminate London for joy of the dissolution, and the mob enforced its will by smashing those which showed no lights. It was a favourite pastime.

The Duke of Wellington, naturally, did not illuminate Apsley House (close to Hyde Park Corner), and the rabble demolished

¹ This tenure (now abolished) was practically a lease for life on peculiar mediaeval conditions.

the lower windows. Afterwards the Duke had them closed by iron shutters which he ordered to remain closed, in witness to the "gratitude" of his fellow-countrymen. They so remained till the end of the nineteenth century.

The elections of 1831 provided such a spectacle of general enthusiasm as probably was never seen in an election before. The result was a large majority in the Commons for the second Reform Bill (July–September, 1831) and a pointed disagreement between that House and the Lords.

It was this which gave pause to the King. He thought a conflict between the two Houses would produce anarchy, ending in a republic, so he implored Grey to compromise and invent a 'moderate' Reform Bill which would conciliate the Lords. As there was no opening for 'compromise' Grey refused to give up the Bill, but asked the King to promise to create enough peers, even to fifty or more, to carry it in the Upper House. How such a step could be constitutional the puzzled old King could not see. The House of Lords had been 'swamped' once, but only once, in 1713, when twelve peers had been created to carry the Peace of Utrecht. William IV became nearly distraught over the problem. If the Bill was not passed he was sure there would be a revolution, but to 'swamp' the Upper House permanently by half a hundred Whigs and Radicals would be a use of royal prerogative unheard of, and a precedent which any future minister with a popular backing might expect to follow, reducing the Upper House to a ridiculous mob and upsetting the British Constitution.

With infinite pains the King devised a 'compromise' of his own. He offered to give peerages to some forty eldest sons so that no permanent 'swamp' would result. But this Grey refused, because most of the individuals were averse from the trouble and expense involved. Then, thought the King, neither they nor the ministers could be heartily in earnest.

The Lords, as expected, threw out the second Reform Bill (October, 1831), and during the recess of Parliament the popular disappointment exploded in alarming riots.

At Birmingham a great open-air meeting was held, where it was suggested that such a Parliament should not be obeyed: let citizens refrain from paying taxes. At Nottingham the unpopular local magnate, the Duke of Newcastle, was punished for his opposition to the Reform Bill by the destruction of the castle. At Derby the gaol was stormed and the prisoners released. At Bristol, always notorious for riots, the cowardice of the authorities allowed the mob nearly to destroy the city. The magistrates and the military commander were intent on thrusting responsibility on to each other; the Mayor stayed at home; the colonel tried to conciliate the mob; the mob pelted the soldiers, the colonel withdrew the troops, and the rioters, unhindered, freed the prisoners and burnt the three gaols. They proceeded to fire the Customs offices,

Mansion House, the episcopal Palace, and a number of houses and warehouses near the river harbour with all their stores of produce. The Cathedral itself was with difficulty saved. In the heart of the city the gutters flamed with burning spirits. Hundreds of rioters perished among the flames and falling ruins. On the third day a bold officer fetched back the troops, and when they charged down the streets the riot ceased.¹

The riots produced little effect on the Government, which introduced the third Reform Bill before Christmas and carried it steadily forward till they were balked again by the King's unwillingness to swamp the House of Lords. Grey, therefore, tendered the resignation of the Cabinet and the King invited the Tory leaders to take office and carry through some "moderate Reform Bill."

Wellington, of course, was ready; he would have been ashamed, he said, to show his face in the streets if he had refused to serve his sovereign. But Peel knew the task to be impossible and refused. The Duke then had to tell the King that he could not form a Ministry; the King recalled Grey and undertook to do whatever should be necessary in the Upper House. He in fact suggested to Wellington that enough of the Tory peers should cease their opposition to the Bill to permit it to pass without compelling him to create peers. The Duke stood up in his place in the House, simply stated the position and walked out, followed by about a hundred others. This withdrawal enabled the Bill to pass rapidly through the Committee stage and to pass by a large majority. Grey told the peers that he believed that the Act would prove to be "in the best sense *conservative* of the Constitution." The royal assent was signified on June 7, 1832.

What this Reform of Parliament accomplished was the extinction of the peculiar authority over the Commons exercised by the great noble families ever since 1689, and the transference of political power from them to the middle classes. The change was not immediately noticeable; for some time the social position and political experience of the county magnates did continue to exercise great influence, but a transformation steadily developed so that the Victorian age became, politically as well as socially, the age of middle class dominance.

On the ratification of the Reform Bill it was taken for granted that a new Parliament must at once be summoned to be elected on the new system, so the third election in three years was held at the close of 1832 and the first reformed House of Commons met in 1833. The two great parties were also transformed; the Whigs dropped their ancient arrogance, fused with the moderate Radicals, and formally adopted the title of *Liberals*, while the followers of Peel ceased to be 'Tory' in the sense of Liverpool or Wellington and, with a patriotic wisdom which made Peel the foremost figure in the House, accepted the Reform Act as permanent and devoted

¹ The best description is probably that in Stanley Weyman's *Chippinge*.

themselves to helping in the work of practical reform which now confronted Parliament. The new term '*Conservative*' was not yet universally adopted, but the general policy of the party was the preservation of national stability.

The Sequel to Reform

It remained to be seen how far a reformed Parliament would satisfy the expectations of the country. That it could satisfy all was impossible, if only from the opposed interests which now were represented in it. Many of the new members came from the northern manufacturing towns and personified the interests of commerce and capital: the new county members sympathised, as naturally, with the views usual among the squires and farmers.

There was therefore a kind of instinctive opposition between town and country members which at first looked like an opposition of North and South. Nevertheless so powerful were the ties of name and habit that the old Whig and Tory parties remained the two recognised political organisations, by no means coinciding with town or country interests or social divisions. This was a great advantage which made it easier to settle some great practical questions on their merits.

The first steps were two reforms or alterations of policy, in the colonial and commercial system, viz. the abolition of slavery in the colonies and the new charter for the East India Company: both were accomplished in 1833 and both may be regarded as concluding a series of changes already entered upon before the long Revolution War broke off Pitt's scheme of reform.

The *Act for the Emancipation of Slaves* (1833) decreed the freedom of the slaves actually in the colonies from August 1, 1834, and as this practically deprived the owners of their inherited property and their source of wealth, the then enormous sum of twenty millions was voted as compensation to them and divided among the colonies affected, the sugar-planters in the West Indies getting the lion's share.

The principle of free commerce was asserted when the renewal of the Charter of the *East India Company* became due (1833). Its last left monopoly, the large one of trade with China, was now revoked and the India and China trade thrown open to all, but the Company was guaranteed in its rights and powers of the government and patronage of India for the next twenty years, subject to the control of the India Board. Thus the Company now became—much against its will—almost wholly a governing body, whereas it had begun, and had striven to remain, a wholly commercial body.

Even more epoch-making for England itself were the two great Acts of 1834 and 1835 which reconstructed the local administration and social system of the nation—the new Poor Law (1834) and the Municipal Reform Act (1835). These Acts introduce a long period

of social reform and development occupying half the Victorian era, and therefore they will best be dealt with in connexion with that great movement (in the succeeding volume of this work). But the decisive step had been already taken in 1832 when the Government appointed a Royal Commission to investigate the problem. The eight Commissioners presented their *Report* early in 1834; a study of its pages conveys a gloomy picture of the conditions in which a large mass of the population were living.

The Whig Cabinet immediately drafted a stringent Bill to give effect to the main recommendations of the Commissioners, which with the support of Peel and Wellington was carried through all its stages in both Houses within four months and became law in August.

Before Parliament could apply itself much further to the list of urgent reforms a striking event occurred to interpose a few practical hindrances and, as some might hold, to point a moral. The venerable Parliament buildings caught fire and were destroyed in the sight of all London.

This catastrophe turned out to be the result of the impact of modern methods on obsolete circumstances. The ancient mode of keeping accounts by notched tally sticks had been persevered with at the Exchequer till 1826, so that a large room was filled with bundles of old tallies. This room being required for a law court, it was ordered to be cleared. No official could suppose it to be his duty to attend to the process, so some ordinary workmen were told to burn the tallies, but not in the open air, from "fear of alarming the neighbours." The men therefore piled the sticks into the stoves of the heating apparatus as fast as possible, till the stone floors became heated like ovens and the old *Painted Chamber*, or House of Lords, burst into flames, which rapidly flew to the House of Commons, or *St. Stephen's Chapel*. All that the fire engines could achieve, and it was much, was to save Westminster Hall, which therefore still abides the one ancient relic of the Royal Palace of Westminster.¹

Little concern or sentiment was expressed. Those old buildings had long since ceased to be fit for the assemblage of Parliament. The Commons, especially, had increased so greatly in numbers since 1800 that their cramped, close chamber was a grave obstacle to public business. The conflagration, therefore, stirred mainly a sense of relief that at last it had become necessary to erect a more spacious and convenient home for the oldest and grandest governing assembly in the world.

¹ Lively description in Martineau's *History of the Peace*, and in *Life and Letters of John Rickman*, pp. 308-312.

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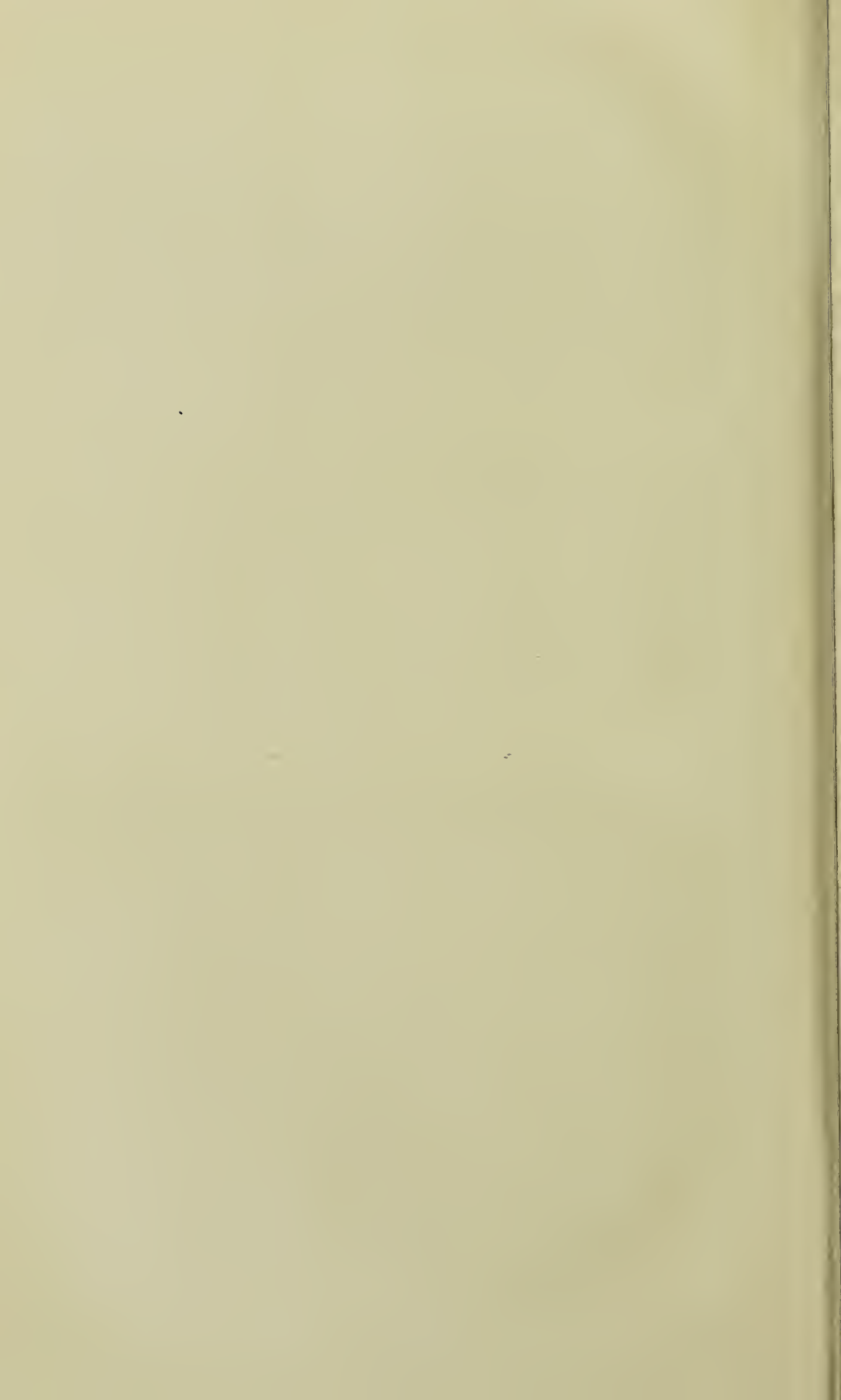
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